

VEDHIK
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ANALYSIS

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FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.

It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.

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The sail that Indian diplomacy, statecraft need

Striking the right balance between continental and maritime security will enable India's long-term security interests



D.B. VENKATESH VARMA

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosts the five Central Asia leaders at the Republic Day Parade on January 26, it will send a strong signal – of the new prominence of the Central Asian region in India's security calculations. In 2015, Mr. Modi visited all the five Central Asian states. Recently, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar also hosted their Central Asian counterparts in Delhi. The collapse of American military power in Afghanistan, the subsequent takeover of Kabul by the Taliban and the consequent rise in the influence of Pakistan and China are developments of high concern for India's continental security interests.

While the Republic Day invitation is significant symbolically, in substance, however, hard work lies ahead. India's continental strategy, in which the Central Asian region is an indispensable link, has progressed intermittently over the past two decades – promoting connectivity, incipient defence and security cooperation, enhancing India's soft power and boosting trade and investment. It is laudable, but as is now apparent, it is insufficient to address the broader geopolitical challenges engulfing the region.

Focus on Eurasia

China's assertive rise, the precipitous withdrawal of forces of the United States/North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) from Afghanistan, the rise of Islamic fundamentalist forces, the changing dynamics of the historic stabilising role of Russia (most recently in Kazakhstan) and related multilateral mechanisms – the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and the Eurasian Economic Union – have all set the stage for a sharpening of the geopolitical competition on the Eurasian landmass. This competition is marked by a weaponisation of resource

and geographical access as a form of domination, practised by China and other big powers. To meet this challenge, evolving an effective continental strategy for India will be a complex and long-term exercise.

Some course correction

India's maritime vision and ambitions have grown dramatically during the past decade, symbolised by its National Maritime Strategy, the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) initiative for the Indian Ocean Region and major initiatives relating to the Indo-Pacific and the Quad, in which maritime security figures prominently. This was perhaps an overdue correction to the historic neglect of India's maritime power. It was also a response to the dramatic rise of China as a military power. It may also be a by-product of the oversized influence over our think-tank community of Anglo-Saxon strategic thinking, which has tended to emphasise the maritime dimensions of China's military rise more than others.

The U.S. is a pre-eminent naval power, even more so in the Indo-Pacific region, and defines its strategic preferences in the light of its own strengths. That said, maritime security is important to keeping sea lanes open for trade, commerce and freedom of navigation, resisting Chinese territorial aggrandisement in the South China Sea and elsewhere, and helping littoral states resist Chinese bullying tactics in interstate relations. However, maritime security and associated dimensions of naval power are not sufficient instruments of statecraft as India seeks diplomatic and security constructs to strengthen deterrence against Chinese unilateral actions and the emergence of a unipolar Asia.

The Chinese willingness and capacity for military intervention and power projection are growing far beyond its immediate region. Its rise is not merely in the maritime domain. It is expanding on the Eurasian continent – its Belt and Road Initiative projects in Central Asia up to Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, undercutting traditional Russian influence, its gaining access to energy and other natural resources, and its dependency-creating investments, cyber and digital pe-



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

netration and expanding influence among political and economic elites across the continent. The American military footprint has shrunk dramatically on the core Eurasian landmass, though it has a substantial military presence on the continental peripheries. Bulwarks against Chinese maritime expansionist gains are relatively easier to build and its gains easier to reverse than the long-term strategic gains that China hopes to secure on continental Eurasia. Like Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) centrality is key to the Indo-Pacific, centrality of the Central Asian states should be key for Eurasia.

Border, connectivity issues

India's partition and the emergence over the past six decades of a persistent two-front threat from Pakistan and China set the stage for a tough continental dimension of our security. There is increased militarisation of the borders with Pakistan and China, with the Ladakh sector now increasingly looking like it will see permanent deployment on the Siachen Glacier. India has been subject for over five decades to a land embargo by Pakistan that has few parallels in relations between two states that are technically not at war. Connectivity means nothing when access is denied through persistent neighbouring state hostility contrary to the canons of international law.

Difficulties have arisen in operationalising an alternative route – the International North-South Transport Corridor on account of the U.S.'s hostile attitude towards Iran. It may appear strange that while we join the U.S. and others in supporting the right of freedom of navigation in the maritime domain, we do not demand with the same force the right of India to conduct interstate trade, commerce, and transit along continental routes – be it through the lifting of Pakistan's blockade on transit

or the lifting of U.S. sanctions against transit through Iran into Eurasia. With the recent Afghan developments, India's physical connectivity challenges with Eurasia have only become starker. The marginalisation of India on the Eurasian continent in terms of connectivity must be reversed.

Where the U.S. stands

The ongoing U.S.-Russia confrontation relating to Ukraine, Russian opposition to future NATO expansion and the broader questions of European security including on the issue of new deployment of intermediate-range missiles, following the demise of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty will have profound consequences for Eurasian security. This comes against the background of an ongoing U.S. review of its global military commitments. While the U.S. had over 2,65,000 troops under its European command in 1992, it now has about 65,000. Even with the rise of China's military power, over the past decade, the U.S. which had about 1,00,000 troops in the early 1990s under what is now called the Indo-Pacific Command, currently has about 90,000 troops mostly committed to the territorial defence of Japan and South Korea. The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) has undergone a major transformation during the last decade; it had about 1,70,000 troops a decade ago (related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan), but has less than 10,000 personnel now.

The bottom line is clear – the U.S. would be severely stretched if it wanted to simultaneously increase its force levels in Europe and the Indo-Pacific. Successive waves of post-Cold War NATO expansion only increased overall insecurity, with the potential to create for the U.S. the mother of all quagmires. A major conflict – if it erupts in Central Europe, pitting Russia, Ukraine and some European states – will stall any hopes of a substantial U.S. military pivot to the Indo-Pacific. Geopolitics may be fractured but always add up globally. Russia and China do not need to be alliance partners to allow for coordinated actions relating to Taiwan or Donbas, as such coordination would flow from the very logic of the strategic

conundrum that the U.S. now finds itself in. In the same vein, European NATO powers dependent on the U.S. can do only so much for strengthening security in the Indo-Pacific. Their engagement with the Indo-Pacific is welcome but we should not only be cognisant of the limitations of geography, obvious gaps between strategic ambition and capacity but also the inherently different standpoints of how major maritime powers view critical questions of continental security. India is unique as no other peer country has the same severity of challenges on both the continental and maritime dimensions.

Be assertive about rights

Going forward, it is clear India will not have the luxury of choosing one over the other; we would need to acquire strategic vision and deploy the necessary resources to pursue our continental interests without ignoring our interests in the maritime domain. This will require a more assertive push for our continental rights – namely that of transit and access, working with our partners in Central Asia, with Iran and Russia (not that we have many other options), and a more proactive engagement with economic and security agendas ranging from the SCO, Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Stabilising Afghanistan is a necessary but not a sufficient condition.

Striking the right balance between continental and maritime security would be the best guarantor of our long-term security interests. But this will not be easy as we would need to work with different partners on different agendas even while their geopolitical contradictions play out in the open. India will need to define its own parameters of continental and maritime security consistent with its own interests. In doing so, at a time of major geopolitical change, maintaining our capacity for independent thought and action (namely strategic autonomy) will help our diplomacy and statecraft navigate the difficult landscape and the choppy waters that lie ahead.

D.B. Venkatesh Varma is a former Ambassador to Russia

'Coup' bid defeated, Russian troops will leave: Tokayev

Leaders of ex-Soviet countries discuss Kazakhstan situation

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ALMATY

Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said on Monday that his country had defeated an attempted coup d'état during historic violence last week, and insisted that Russian-led troops called in to help quell the unrest would go home "soon".

During a video-conference of leaders from several ex-Soviet countries in a military alliance that sent in the troops, his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin confirmed they would leave as soon as their mission ended.

The Central Asian country has been left reeling in the wake of the worst violence in its recent history, but life in Kazakhstan's largest city Almaty appeared to be returning to normal on



Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

Monday, with Internet coverage restored as the nation observed a day of mourning for dozens killed in the clashes.

Mr. Tokayev told the video-conference that "armed militants" had used the backdrop of protests to try to seize power.

"The main goal was obvious: the undermining of the constitutional order, the destruction of government

institutions and the seizure of power. It was an attempted coup d'état," Mr. Tokayev said.

The Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) has deployed just over 2,000 troops and 250 pieces of military hardware, the Kazakh leader said, vowing that the detachment would leave the country "soon".

"As of January 10, 7,939 people have been detained," the Interior Ministry said in a statement.

Some have voiced concerns that Moscow could leverage the mission to shore up its influence in ex-Soviet Kazakhstan, with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken warning last week that "once Russians are in your house, it's sometimes very difficult to get them to leave".

‘No one should interfere in China-Lanka ties’

Chinese Foreign Minister proposes a ‘forum on the development of Indian Ocean island countries’

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

No “third party” should interfere in China-Sri Lanka ties, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has said, during his recent visit to Colombo, while also proposing a forum for Indian Ocean island nations.

During his nearly 24-hour visit to Colombo, where he met the Sri Lankan leadership, Mr. Wang spoke of the “friendly relationship” between China and Sri Lanka that “benefits the development of both countries and serves the fundamental interest” of both peoples, a statement issued by the Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Monday. “It does not target any third party and should not be interfered with by any third party. The all-round cooperation and strategic mutual trust between the two countries have injected positive energy into regional peace and stability,” according to the readout from Beijing.

In December 2021, the Co-

lombo-based Chinese Embassy tweeted about a Chinese company shifting its solar energy project from northern Sri Lanka to the Maldives, in the wake of “security concerns from a third party”. While the Embassy did not name the party, it was clearly alluding to India that objected to the Chinese project in three islands off Jaffna peninsula.

Rubber-rice pact

Mr. Wang was on a brief official visit to Sri Lanka – as part of a five-nation tour in the New Year – to launch celebrations marking the 70th anniversary of the historic Rubber-Rice Pact, and the 65th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and China.

His visit came at a time when Sri Lanka is battling a severe economic crisis of a persisting dollar crunch, soaring living costs and a shortage of essentials in the import-reliant island nation. Sri Lankan President Gota-



Wang Yi with Gotabaya Rajapaksa in Colombo on Monday. ■ TWITTER

baya Rajapaksa urged China to restructure Sri Lanka’s debt, and help the country cope with the economic strain.

FTA talks

According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Mr. Wang said the two sides should make good use of “the two engines”, referring to the \$1.4 billion China-backed Colombo Port City in Colombo, and the Hambantota Port in the island’s Southern Province. He urged Sri Lanka to “tap the opportunities” of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

and China’s “vast market”, and restart talks on a free trade agreement between China and Sri Lanka “to send more positive signals to the world and contribute to Sri Lanka’s economic recovery and development”, the Ministry’s statement on his meeting with Mr. Gotabaya said.

The resident Chinese envoy also conveyed the same to a select group of Sri Lankan journalists following the visit, although official statements from the Sri Lankan side made no mention of either “third party” interference, or resuming FTA talks. During Mr. Wang’s visit, China and agreed to extend Yuan 800 million for partnerships in the health sector, for technical cooperation, besides supporting construction of low-cost housing in capital Colombo.

Another aspect of Mr. Wang’s bilateral discussions in Colombo, which was not captured in local statements or media, was his proposal for a “forum on the develop-

ment of Indian Ocean island countries” to build consensus and synergy, and promote common development.

Mr. Wang, according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, told the Sri Lankan leadership: “During my visit to several Indian Ocean island countries this time, I feel that all island countries share similar experiences and common needs, with similar natural endowment and development goals, and have favorable conditions and full potential for strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation,” while proposing the forum that sounded similar to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) initiative.

New Delhi would watch any regional forum with interest, amid its own efforts. Last year, a Secretariat for Trilateral National Security Advisers (NSA) on Maritime Security Cooperation among India, Maldives and Sri Lanka was set up in Colombo.

A BIT to review

The Committee on External Affairs' report on India and BITs has novel suggestions but is lacking in some aspects



PRABHASH RANJAN

The report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs on 'India and bilateral investment treaties (BITs)' was presented to Parliament last month. This report is momentous as it comes a decade after India lost the first investment treaty claim in 2011 (*White Industries v. India*). The loss in this case was perceived as an ominous sign. It became a watershed moment for India and transformed the trajectory of India's BIT landscape triggering sweeping changes such as unilateral termination of these treaties.

Overall context

The broader context in which the Committee took up the task of reviewing India's approach towards BITs has three core elements. First, since the *White Industries* case, foreign investors have sued India around 20 times for alleged BIT breaches. This made India the 10th most frequent respondent-state globally in terms of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) claims from 1987 to 2019 (UNCTAD). Second, India adopted a new Model BIT in 2016, which marked a significant departure from its previous treaty practice. Third, India is in the process of negotiating new investment deals (separately or as part of free trade agreements) with important countries such as Australia and the U.K.

The Committee examined this overall context and made vital recommendations for the government to consider. First, it articulated its discontentment at the fact that India has signed very few investment treaties after the adoption of the Model BIT. It recommends that India expedite the existing negotiations and conclude the agreements at the earliest because a delay might adversely impact foreign investment.

Second, contrary to the position of policymakers, the committee recognises the potential of BITs in luring foreign direct investment (FDI). This aligns with the findings of several empirical studies that show that while individual BITs do not impact investment inflows, the cumulative effect of all BITs signed by India positively influenced FDI inflows. In this regard, curiously, the committee recommends that India should sign more BITs in core or priority sectors to attract FDI. Generally, BITs are not signed for specific sectors. Asking India to do so will be a novel pathway to investment treaty-making. It will require an overhauling of India's extant treaty practice that focuses on safe-

guarding certain kinds of regulatory measures from ISDS claims rather than limiting BITs to specific sectors.

Third, the committee recommends that India's Model BIT be fine-tuned. This is welcome because the Model BIT gives precedence to the state's regulatory interests over the rights of foreign investors. However, the key question is, what trajectory will this fine-tuning take? The Model BIT should be recalibrated keeping two factors in mind: tightening the language of the existing provisions to circumscribe the discretion of ISDS arbitral tribunals that offer broad interpretations, and striking a balance between the goals of investment protection and the state's right to adopt bonafide regulatory measures for public welfare. The committee's report mostly concentrates on the first factor. If the Model BIT is tweaked with the sole motive to reduce arbitral discretion, it might result in further skewing the balance towards the host state's right to regulate. This would make it arduous for India to convince its potential treaty partners like the EU which already have misgivings about the Model BIT.

Fourth, the committee recommends bolstering the capacity of government officials in the area of investment treaty arbitration. While the government has taken some steps in this direction through a few training workshops, more needs to be done. What is needed is an institutionalised mechanism for capacity-building through the involvement of public and private universities that have competence in this field. The government should also consider establishing chairs in universities to foster research and teaching activities in international investment law.

Missed opportunity

A very large proportion of ISDS claims against India is due to poor governance. This includes changing laws retroactively (which led to Vodafone and Cairn suing India), annulling agreement in the wake of imagined scam (taking away S-band satellite spectrum from Devas), and the judiciary's fragility in getting its act together (sitting on the *White Industries* case for enforcement of its commercial award for years). The Committee could have emphasised on greater regulatory coherence, policy stability, and robust governance structures to avoid ISDS claims.

The government should promptly assemble an expert team to review the Model BIT. This team should involve critical voices because plural viewpoints can coalesce into an efficacious policy.

Prabhash Ranjan is Professor and Vice Dean, Jindal Global Law School, O.P. Jindal Global University. He appeared before the said Committee as an expert witness. Views are personal

EXPLAINER

Understanding the protests in Kazakhstan

What is the role of the CSTO in ongoing agitations? What does Russia aim to achieve by sending in troops?

UMA PURUSHOTHAMAN

The story so far: The new year saw protests in yet another unexpected place: Kazakhstan in Central Asia. Although ruled by autocratic regimes since the USSR's disintegration, it is unexpected because Kazakhstan is the richest Central Asian Republic and is thought to be one of the more stable of these republics.

The protests started on 2 January in the western town of Zhanaozen. They were apparently prompted by the doubling of gas prices in the hydrocarbon-rich country. Protests then spread across the country. While the rise in fuel prices might have been the immediate trigger for the protests, the protests also brought to the fore popular grievances over structural problems like corruption and socio-economic inequality as well as calls for regime change. The protests also appear to be a struggle for power among the Kazakh elites. The situation in Kazakhstan is a classic case of the dilemma of transfer of power in strongman regimes, something which resonates in Russia as well. The protests have not ended despite the resignation of the Government and the removal of the unpopular Nursultan Nazarbayev as chairman of the country's Security Council. He was also the former President who ruled the country for 28 years.

The situation in Kazakhstan is a classic case of the dilemma of transfer of power in strongman regimes, something which resonates in Russia as well.

The Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has called on the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), for help to deal with the protests. The CSTO responded swiftly by sending around 2,500 troops on January 6, including Russian paratroopers and Belarusian special troops. Other CSTO members are also sending troops. Incidentally, this is the first time the CSTO has deployed troops under Article 4 of its treaty, which can be used in the case of attacks against member states which could affect their stability or sovereignty.

What is the CSTO?

The CSTO is a Russia-dominated security alliance (Russia contributes 50% of its budget) which was established after



USSR's fall when some members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) signed a mutual defence treaty named the Collective Security Treaty. Meant as a replacement for the Warsaw Pact, the Treaty came into force in 1994. In 2002, it became the CSTO. The CSTO has six members today: Russia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

The organisation is based, as the name indicates, on the principle of collective security or the idea of "one for all and all for one". Essentially, this means that an aggressor against any one state in the organisation is considered to be an aggressor against all other states. So, all the members would act together to repel the aggressor. Collective security is not a bad word: this is also the principle on which NATO, the UN and earlier the League of Nations were founded.

The CSTO has not been very active in recent years though it conducts some joint military exercises and facilitates arms sales between members. It has also created a peacekeeping force and a rapid-reaction force and the members have pursued a common air defence system. The CSTO did

not act, for instance, last year during the stand-off between Armenia and Azerbaijan though Yerevan had asked it for support.

Why has the CSTO intervened now? There could be two reasons for the CSTO's intervention in Kazakhstan.

One, Russia is concerned that political instability in the country could lead to the rise of either ultra-nationalists (which could threaten the safety of ethnic Russians who comprise about 19 percent of the population) or radical Islamic forces which could then spread across the region and into Russia itself which shares an open border over 7,500 km long with Kazakhstan. Russia is also worried that the protests might be backed by foreigners and Tokayev has already called the protestors "foreign-trained terrorists". The Kremlin has long been worried about such "external interventions" in what it considers to be its backyard. By sending in troops through the CSTO, Moscow is sending a clear message that it will not tolerate any attempts at "colour revolutions" in its sphere of influence.

Two, if the protests are quelled, the

Kazakh regime would be indebted to Russia, and this would effectively end Kazakhstan's long-standing multi-vector foreign policy of balancing among Russia, China, the West, and Turkey. Russia would gain an ally for good. This might hold true for the other Central Asian Republics as well and Russia would have a more dominant role in their foreign policies, particularly on issues like foreign military bases.

What next?

It remains to be seen if or when the protests will die down and whether the CSTO troops will leave if they do subside. U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken has already warned that "one lesson of recent history is that once Russians are in your house, it's sometimes very difficult to get them to leave." China, Kazakhstan's other big neighbour, which is embroiled in a competition for influence with Russia in the region, would be watching with interest as it has large investments through the Belt Road Initiative in Kazakhstan.

Uma Purushothaman is Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations, Central University of Kerala.

Violent clashes: A body of a victim covered by a banner, right, which was burned after protests, in Almaty, Kazakhstan on January 6, 2022.

AP

THE GIST

■ The protests in Kazakhstan started on 2 January. While the rise in fuel prices might have been the immediate trigger for the protests, they also brought to the fore grievances over structural problems like corruption and socio-economic inequality. The Kazakh President has called on the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), for help to deal with the protests.

■ The CSTO is a Russia-dominated security alliance which was established after the USSR's fall when some members of the Commonwealth of Independent States signed a mutual defence treaty named the Collective Security Treaty. The CSTO has six members today: Russia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

■ Russia is concerned that political instability in the neighbouring country could lead to the rise of either ultra-nationalists or radical Islamic forces. However, if the protests are quelled, the Kazakh regime would be indebted to Russia.

U.S., Russia hold key dialogue on Ukraine

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman said on Monday that she offered to make reciprocal moves with Russia on missiles and exercises to de-escalate tensions but renewed warnings of major costs if Moscow invaded Ukraine.

After more than seven hours of talks in Geneva with Russian Deputy Foreign Mi-

nister Sergei Ryabkov, Ms. Sherman said the U.S. was ready to meet again, but that Russia had not offered assurances that it will pull back troops amassed near Ukraine.

Ms. Sherman declined to give full details but said the U.S. made proposals on missile placement and said it was “open to discussing the future of certain missile systems in Europe” along the

lines of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, from which ex-President Donald Trump withdrew.

“We are also open to discussing ways we can set reciprocal limits on the size and scope of military exercises and to improve transparency about those exercises – again, on a reciprocal basis,” she said in a telephonic press briefing.

If Russia invades, “there

will be significant costs and consequences, well beyond what they faced in 2014,” when Moscow seized the Crimean peninsula and backed an insurgency in eastern Ukraine, she said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Ryabkov said, “We explained to our colleagues that we have no plans, no intentions to ‘attack’ Ukraine.... There is no reason to fear any escalation in this regard.”

MHA seeks more time to frame CAA rules

Without the rules being framed, the Act cannot be implemented; the third extension expired on Jan. 9

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sought another extension from parliamentary committees in the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha to frame the rules of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, a senior government official said on Monday.

The Hindu reported on January 10 that the third and the latest extension expired on January 9 but the Ministry did not notify the rules.

An official in the Rajya Sabha confirmed that the Ministry had made a request but no decision had been taken yet to grant the extension as the Chairman of the Committee on Subordinate



To the streets: Citizens staging protests against the CAA and the NRC in Chennai. ■ FILE PHOTO

Legislation Partap Singh Bajwa was travelling due to Punjab elections.

Without the rules being framed, the Act cannot be implemented. The committee in the Lok Sabha was understood to have granted the

extension in November last, an official said.

The committee chairman in the Lok Sabha is YSR Congress's Balashowry Vallabhaneni.

The MHA has to make separate requests to the two

committees.

Earlier, it had had sought time till April 9, 2021, and then July 9, 2021 from the committees to notify the rules, which are to be published in the Gazette of India.

Three months

As per the Manual on Parliamentary Work, in case the Ministries/departments are not able to frame the rules within the prescribed period of six months after a law is passed, “they should seek extension of time from the Committee on Subordinate Legislation stating reasons for such extension” which cannot be more than three months at a time.

However, last time the ex-

tension was granted for six months.

The CAA was passed by Parliament on December 11, 2019, and it received assent from the President on December 12. In January 2020, the Ministry notified that the Act will come into force from January 10, 2020.

The CAA provides citizenship on the basis of religion to six undocumented non-Muslim communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India on or before December 31, 2014. It exempts the members of the six communities from any criminal case under Foreigners Act, 1946 and Passport Act, 1920 if they entered India before December 31, 2014.

Amendments that are unnecessary

Why a national database of registered births and deaths is not required



K. NARAYANAN UNNI

The Central government had invited comments on the proposed amendments to the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 (RBD Act). One major proposal is to prepare a national database of registered births and deaths. This is intended to be used to update, for every birth and death, the databases created in accordance with many other laws, such as the National Population Register, voter list and Aadhaar database.

Under the RBD Act, it is the responsibility of the States to register births and deaths. State governments have set up facilities for registering births and deaths and keeping records. A Chief Registrar appointed in every State is the executive authority for implementation of the Act. A hierarchy of officials at the district and lower levels do the work. The Registrar General of India (RGI), appointed under this Act, is responsible for coordinating and unifying the implementation of the RBD Act.

Unnecessary provisions

Information on registered births and deaths is now stored in State-level databases using a unified software in many States. This system enables citizens to easily obtain the required services. It also helps prevent fake registrations and errors. Birth and death registers also include some personal information about the child born, the child's parents, and the deceased. In addition, some information required for demographic studies is also collected during registration. This information is not included in the register and is used only to collate vital statistics.

On registration of a birth or death, the information can automatically go to the concerned authorities. However, one has to examine the need for each birth and death to be communicated to other databases. It may be important for a population register to get that information instantaneously. For other databases, it may be enough to get that information on a monthly or even annual basis. For example, the election authorities may



Salem Corporation organising a two-day special drive to register births and deaths at its office premises in 2010. ■ P. GOUTHAM

require the list of deaths only once in six months or so for removing dead persons from the database. Cancellation of passports or driving licences on the death of the holder is not very important as they cannot be misused that easily.

In all cases where instantaneous updating is not necessary, the concerned databases should collect the information from the best source. Whether it should be collected from the birth and death database is an important question. The address in the birth and death database may be different from the current or permanent address of the mother or deceased. The mother may have gone to her parent's place for delivery and that address may have been recorded while admitting her in a hospital. Similarly, many people are admitted to hospitals in the city where they may have a temporary contact address. It is this that gets recorded in the hospital and in the death register. So, some data item, like the Aadhaar number, is necessary to link the information with other databases.

In an ideal situation, a birth and death database need not interact with any database other than a population database. This is because a population database will have all the information, like date and place of occurrence of the birth or death and names of the parents/deceased, that may be required by other databases.

A proposal is to include the Aadhaar number, if available, as one

piece of information to be reported while reporting a birth or death, by amending Section 8 of the Act. This is an unnecessary amendment as the Aadhaar number can be included in the forms used for reporting births or deaths. Having already directed the States to include the Aadhaar number of the deceased in the death reporting form, it is not clear why it is necessary to amend the Act for its inclusion.

State governments maintain databases of births and deaths, some of which are manually done now. Information required for updating other databases for each birth and death can be directly given from the State-level database. Extracting part of the information therein to create a national database to be maintained by the RGI appears an unnecessary duplication and will only create an intermediate administrative layer without any value addition.

The databases maintained by the States now may not follow the same structure for various data items. I am not sure whether they all follow the same standard even for writing the names of individuals. For example, the names of many people in Kerala and Tamil Nadu have the name of the family and father's name preceding the first name of the person while many databases use the first name/middle name/surname format.

The Central government should prescribe standards for data items in the birth and death database main-

tained by the State governments. This is necessary even if a national database of births and deaths is to be created. These standards should be common for other databases. This would make it easier to communicate information automatically to other databases. The cultural diversity across the country should be kept in mind while prescribing standards so that the citizens are not hassled later on.

There is a proposal that the RBD Act mention that information from the national database would be used to update the Population Register, Aadhaar database, passport database, etc. and that the birth and death certificates issued under this Act should be taken as evidence of date and place of birth for issuing Aadhaar cards, passports and driving licence, for enrolling in voter's list or for school admission. These are unnecessary provisions. The law for each of these databases can specify whether the information contained in the birth and death register should be used for a particular purpose. It may be noted that till recently, the instructions regarding application for a passport contained a provision that only birth certificates issued by the Registrar of Births and Deaths would be accepted as proof of date and place of birth.

Need to look forward

Activities relating to the registration of births and deaths have undergone a sea change in the last decade with computerisation. However, the law has not been amended to take care of this reality. There is a need for updating the law to take care of these and future developments. The proposed amendments fall short of this.

A bill was introduced in Parliament in 2012 to amend the RBD Act to include marriage registration in its purview and to make registration of marriages compulsory. It lapsed as it was not taken up by the Lok Sabha. The Law Commission examined the issue again and recommended in its Report No. 270 that the RBD Act may be amended for including marriage registration. Instead of going for another amendment for this purpose, it should have been taken care of within the current proposals.

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Boosting protection

Vaccination must be accompanied by COVID appropriate behaviour

Nearly a year after India rolled out the COVID-19 vaccination programme, it began administering a 'precaution dose' – scientifically called a third or booster dose – to people above 60 years with comorbidities, health-care and frontline workers on January 10. On day one, about one million people received the booster shot. Though 98 million people above 60, 9.7 million health-care workers and nearly 17 million frontline workers have received the second dose as on January 9, the actual number of people in the three groups eligible to receive the booster dose will be lower. The reason: only those who have taken the second dose nine months or 39 weeks ago will be eligible to receive the booster shot. Also, among the elderly, only those with comorbidities will be eligible to receive the additional shot. The nine-month gap between the second and the booster dose is not based on any clinical trials but evidence of protection offered by natural infection lasting up to that period. The only data on homologous boosting of fully vaccinated individuals six months after the second dose comes from a study using Covaxin in 184 participants; Covaxin comprises 12.7% of the nearly 1.52 billion doses administered so far. But a sizable percentage of the fully vaccinated might have had a previous infection, increasing the level of protection and possibly the duration of protection that hybrid immunity offers. A booster shot in such people will confer greater protection against severe disease and death.

None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently being used for immunisation offers sterilising immunity, which completely prevents infection. Administering a booster dose will surely increase the level of neutralising antibodies but even that does not guarantee full protection from infection. The prime objective of COVID-19 vaccines, including the booster, is not to prevent infection but to only mitigate disease severity. If this was true even with the virus strain first identified in Wuhan, China, and all the vaccines that have been developed using this strain, the variants which have emerged later have highlighted the limitation of the COVID-19 vaccines currently available. Even if the variants have demonstrated increased ability to cause breakthrough infections among those who have received a booster shot, all the vaccines have been highly effective in stopping the disease from becoming severe and causing death. Till such time as a safe and highly efficacious intranasal vaccine that confers a very high level of protection against infection becomes available, even those who receive the booster shot cannot let their guard down. Since none of the booster doses has been developed using the variants that have emerged, the highly infectious Omicron variant with its high immune escape capability can cause breakthrough infections. Hence, vaccines should not be seen as a silver bullet but must be used in combination with masks and other COVID appropriate behaviour to drastically cut the risk of infection.

Indian IT firms to log 20-30% growth in 2022: analysts

'Digital transformation to power deals'

MINI TEJASWI
BENGALURU

India's IT firms will benefit from an 'enormous wave of opportunities' in 2022 as the trends of increasing cloud adoption and digital transformation that dominated 2021 gather momentum and drive 20%-30% growth for the industry, forecast global tech analysts.

"The opportunity is far bigger than just the post-COVID recovery," said Peter Bendor-Samuel, CEO at the Dallas-based sourcing research firm Everest Group. "It is a mega wave driven by digital transformation at scale... this wave is enormous and big enough to drive double-digit growth in the range of 20%-30%, especially for firms that are equipped to meet the demand for talent," he added.

With global enterprises increasingly embracing cloud and rapidly moving to modernise their technology infrastructure 'like never before', Indian IT vendors had seen strong momentum on digital deals, according to Mr. Bendor-Samuel and Hansa Iyengar, principal analyst at Omdia, a technology advisory in London.

"Q3 won't be soft this time and the quarter will bring in momentum growth especially for digital services," said Ms. Iyengar. "The growth will accelerate in the fourth quarter as well. However, the third wave of COVID may bring some disruptions and these could lead to some hiccups as vendors recalibrate," she cautioned.

India's top two technology services providers Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. and Infosys Ltd. are set to



announce fiscal third-quarter results on January 12. Traditionally, the three-month period ending in December sees a softening of momentum in the run-up to the year-end holidays especially at clients in North America and Europe.

"We expect a continuation of the 2021 growth surge as the race to tie up cloud and modernisation deals reached new heights," said Phil Fersht, CEO of London-based HFS Research.

'Talent will be key'

However, the start of the 2022 would be a little slower-than-expected as the Omicron variant of the coronavirus had created some uncertainty and slowed down deal completions, Mr. Fersht said, adding, "but we expect it to pick up strongly by mid-quarter."

The key drivers of business demand for Indian IT in 2022 would be automation, artificial intelligence, cloud migration/modernisation, security, consulting and systems integration. Shifting focus from slow-growing initiatives and low-hanging opportunities to platform-based operations and effectively handling talent shortages would be extremely critical for Indian providers, the analysts said.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

GST reform needs a new grand bargain

The GST compensation issue strengthens the necessity for a new system between sovereign and sub-sovereign entities

THE GIST

■ When the GST was put into practice, the States gave up their right to collect sales tax and sundry taxes while the Centre gave up excise and services tax. Their consent was secured by a promise from the Centre of reimbursing any shortfall in tax revenues for a period of five years. But it seems that using an equivalent of the *Force Majeure* clause in commercial contracts, the Centre is abdicating its responsibility of making up for the shortfall.

■ The Centre should keep its promise for multiple reasons. The States do not have recourse to options that the Centre has. The Centre can command much lower rates of borrowing from the markets as compared to the States. Fighting this recession through increased fiscal stimulus is the job of macroeconomic stabilisation, which is the Centre's domain. And most importantly, breaking this important promise causes a serious dent in the trust built up between the Centre and States.

■ Keeping in mind the increasing urbanisation and decentralisation, 10% of the 12% GST should be equally shared between the States and the Centre, and 2% must be earmarked exclusively for the urban and rural local bodies, which ensures some basic revenue autonomy to them.

AJIT RANADE
VIJAY KELKAR

Just a day ahead of the 46th meeting of the GST Council on December 31, the Finance Ministers of several States had a pre-Budget interaction with the Union Finance Minister and demanded that the GST compensation scheme be extended beyond June 2022, when it is set to expire. Economists Vijay Kelkar and Ajit Ranade argue that there is need for an overhaul of the GST regime in this article dated September 01, 2020.

Three years ago, the Centre and the States of the Union of India struck a grand bargain resulting in the launch of the unified Goods and Services Tax (GST) era. The States gave up their right to collect sales tax and sundry taxes, and the Centre gave up excise and services tax. The nationwide GST promised frictionless commerce across State borders, buoyant and leakproof tax compliance, and removal of inefficiencies like the cascade of "tax on tax". This historic grand bargain was the result of painstaking consensus building, which *inter alia* involved addressing the apprehension of States, of revenue loss due to the GST.

Abdication of responsibility

Their consent was secured by a promise of reimbursing any shortfall in tax revenues for a period of five years. This reimbursement was to be funded by a special cess called the GST compensation cess. The promised reimbursement was to fill the gap for an assured 14% year on year tax growth for five years, and it was generous to a fault. Neither the national aggregate nor any of the major States had this record for the previous five years.

But that was not the only fault with the design, which had also failed to learn from the successful design of harmonising Value Added Tax (VAT) rates across the nation, implemented just a decade ago. VAT was the precursor to GST and also needed a consensus. That design too had an inbuilt reimbursement formula. But that tapered over the years, making room for incentives for tax effort from the States, sort of "skin in the game".

As the economy battles a pandemic and recession, the tax collection has dropped significantly, while expenditure needs are sharply higher, especially at the frontline of the battle, at the State level. But it seems that the States have been told that they are on their own to meet the shortfall in revenues. Using an equivalent of the *Force Majeure* clause in commercial contracts, the Centre is abdicating its responsibility of making up for the shortfall in 14% growth in GST revenues to the states.

The onus is on the Centre

This is wrong on many counts. First, the States do not have recourse to multiple options that the

Centre has, such as issue of a sovereign bond (in dollars or rupees) or a loan against public sector unit shares from the Reserve Bank of India.

Second, the Centre can anyway command much lower rates of borrowing from the markets as compared to the States. Third, in terms of aggregate public sector borrowing, it does not matter for the debt markets, nor the rating agencies, whether it is the States or the Centre that is increasing their indebtedness. Fourth, fighting this recession through increased fiscal stimulus is basically the job of macroeconomic stabilisation, which is the Centre's domain. Fifth, and most importantly, breaking this important promise, using the alibi of the COVID-19 pandemic causes a serious dent in the trust built up between the Centre and States.

Cooperative federalism is in the nature of a "repeated game" between the two entities, and every action must think of the future consequences, not just the immediate ones. Will it not weaken the foundation of trust?

Kautliya too would have advised the sovereign against renegeing on the promised bailout, as fulfilling the obligation helps build trust with sub-sovereigns.

The Australian example

The issue of GST compensation to the States is just the latest in the bumpy three-year journey of the new tax design. It is clear that the design needs a radical overhaul. Just tinkering with the compensation mechanism, or frequently changing rate slabs, or pushing more goods in the "sin tax" cess category, to earn revenue that is not shareable with the States, is not the way forward. What we instead need is a Grand Bargain 2.0 between the sovereign and the sub-sovereign entities.

What would this be based upon? We have to go back to the first principles. GST is a destination-based consumption tax, which must include all goods and services with very few exceptions, such as food and medicine. That widening of the tax base itself will allow us to go back to the original recommendation of a standard rate of 12%, to be fixed for at least a five-year period.

A comparison with Australia which also coincidentally shares its GST anniversary with India, is apt. For the past two decades their GST rate has been constant at 10%. Of course India's single rate of 12% has to cover petrol, diesel, electricity, transport and real estate as well. Some extra elbow room for the States' revenue autonomy is obtained by allowing the States non-VATable surcharges on a small list of "sin" goods such as liquor, tobacco, polluting goods such as sport utility vehicles, and industrial fuels such as diesel, aviation turbine fuel and coal. A low moderate single rate of 12% encourages better compliance, reduces the need to do arbitrary

classification and discretion, reduces litigation and will lead to buoyancy in collection.

Incidentally this redesign will scrupulously avoid the bogey of a "revenue neutral rate" (RNR) which needlessly occupied the attention of lawmakers and officials. GST is a long-term structural reform, while RNR is a short term and basically an elusive concept. In the long term there are many changes in consumption patterns, production configurations and locations, which cannot be anticipated and hence a static concept of RNR cannot be the reference. The commitment to a low and stable rate, à la Australia and many other federal democracies, is a must. Of course the compensation-cum-reimbursement incentive can remain, but more in the nature of what was done for VAT harmonisation.

Third tier of government

This new grand bargain must recognise the increasing importance of the third tier of government. Even after 28 years of the 73rd and 74th Amendments, the local governments do not have the promised transfer of funds, functions and functionalities. These local bodies face increased responsibility of providing government services especially in view of increased urbanisation and decentralisation. Of the 12% GST, 10% should be equally shared between the States and the Centre, and 2% must be earmarked exclusively for the urban and rural local bodies, which ensures some basic revenue autonomy to them. The actual distribution across panchayats, districts and cities would be given by respective State Finance Commissions. GST consumption tax paid by every citizen establishes a tighter link between the governed and the government. The quality of governance improves as also, the tax base is better aligned with responsibilities of various tiers of government.

This fresh approach also calls for an overhaul of the interstate GST and the administration of the e-way bill. Research papers by Bhaskar and Kelkar (*Reforming Integrated GST: Towards accelerating exports Policy Brief by Dr. V. Bhaskar and Dr. Vijay Kelkar and National Agenda for 2019 - A proposal for the GST reform by Dr. V. Bhaskar and Dr. Vijay Kelkar*) describe the simplified mechanism, which essentially reduces the transaction costs drastically. The current system is too complex and burdensome. We also need to zero rate exports. GST is a crucial and long-term structural reform which can address the fiscal needs of the future, strike the right and desired balance to achieve co-operative federalism and also lead to enhanced economic growth. The current design and implementation has failed to deliver on that promise. A new grand bargain is needed.

Vijay Kelkar and Ajit Ranade are, respectively, Vice-President and Member, Pune International Centre

‘Chip shortages to persist in the wake of third wave’

Firms coping with situation: Moody’s

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Shortage of semiconductor chips would continue following the rapid spread of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus across the world but the supply disruptions would not worsen in 2022 as the Omicron surge should have a milder impact on the chip supply chain, Tim Uy, senior economist at Moody’s Analytics, wrote in a report.

He said companies had started learning how to deal with increasingly common shortages by building buffer inventory and exploring alternative sourcing to deal with the situation.

“As demand grows, we expect supply to slowly but



steadily catch up,” wrote Mr. Uy. “The major new foundries being built will only come on line after 2023, so we expect capacity utilisation to exceed 80% across all production lines through 2022,” he said.

“This means that lead times will be extended as supply remains tight,” the economist added.

EXPLAINER

Flying cars and the future in cities

Are flying taxis a viable option? What are the challenges and where will the energy source come from?

VENKAT VISWANATHAN
SHASHANK SRIPAD

The story so far: As climate change concerns take centre stage and the world tries out cleaner energy options, four companies commercialising urban aircraft have gone public, loading themselves with a war chest to go through the challenging certification process. Over 30 or so companies are running demonstration programmes across the globe (Joby, KittyHawk, Archer and so forth in the U.S., Lilium, Heart Aerospace in Europe, eHang in China, ePlane in India).

What are flying cars?

Flying cars, technically known as vertical take-off and landing aircraft, can take off vertically from the top of a building much like a helicopter, then shift to cruise like a conventional plane and then land vertically.

Two key breakthrough technologies, decades in the making, have enabled this. The first is going electric – aviation has always had a weight problem in using battery power for propulsion. Li-ion batteries have been steadily progressing at a rate of about 5% per year and finally,



A prototype “flying car” developed by Boeing from 2019. AFP

we are reaching an inflection point where compelling urban aircraft is possible. By going electric, a second breakthrough propulsion concept is enabled – distributed electric propulsion. The approach is to spread the electric motors throughout the aircraft enabling improved performance in energy efficiency, noise levels and handling performance.

Is it a sustainable option?

The year 2021 was a turning point for flying cars. The vision that is being sold is urban aircraft jettisoning passengers across a city in so-called flying taxis. For

sustainability enthusiasts, this raises a natural question: can this be a sustainable solution for urban mobility? Sustainability is closely linked to how much energy is consumed by the aircraft and where that energy comes from. To think about the energy efficiency of aircraft and compare it to ground-based alternatives like cars, we can consider the energy required to transport one passenger across two points in a city. If we assume the distance between the two points is 5 kilometres, then a medium-sized sedan would consume about 1 kWh (1 unit of electricity). A natural question is how much energy

would be consumed to travel that same distance in an urban aircraft? Your intuitive guess is likely to be much more. We unpacked the counter-intuitive answer to this question in a publication in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. A well-designed urban aircraft can exploit cruising using fixed wings of the aircraft at a very low energy consumption – think gliders and how they consume no energy at all. An urban aircraft can cover the same 5 kilometres in as less as 0.6 kWh for small urban aircraft and a touch over 0.9 kWh for slightly larger ones.

How will it impact travel time?

The interesting aspect of this comparison doesn’t stop there. The travel time for the urban aircraft can be about two to six times faster than the car, because there will not be as much traffic in the sky in the beginning.

Where’s the hitch?

The optimistic take gives the impression that one can hop on an urban ride across the city tomorrow. Not quite, the last missing piece is to be able to reliably make these trips for many thousands of flights to make the economics work.

Critical to this is the life of the batteries that power the aircraft. All of us are familiar with the degrading performance of Li-ion batteries in laptops, smartphones and electric cars. In an urban aircraft, there is one additional twist: unlike how consumers accept their videos streaming slower on older battery-powered phones, urban aircraft cannot take-off and land differently as their batteries age. The need to take-off and land vertically imposes a high power requirement, which sets the safety-critical limit for the operation. Given the rapid rate of progress with batteries, it is only a matter of time before we enter the Jetsonian age, where we can skip traffic and travel across metropolitan cities in a matter of minutes for trips that take hours today. Apart from the travel speed, the aircraft will fly at much lower emissions than the internal combustion engine cars today and on par or better than electric vehicles.

Venkat Viswanathan is an Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Carnegie Mellon. Shashank Sripad is a Presidential Fellow and PhD candidate in Mechanical Engineering at Carnegie Mellon

THE GIST

■ Flying cars, technically known as vertical take-off and landing aircraft, can take off vertically from the top of a building, then shift to cruise like a conventional plane and then land vertically.

■ Sustainability for such an urban aircraft is closely linked to how much energy is consumed and where that energy comes from. A well-designed aircraft can exploit cruising using fixed wings of the aircraft at a very low energy consumption.

■ Urban aircrafts cannot take-off or land efficiently as their batteries age. The need to take-off and land vertically imposes a high power requirement, which sets the safety-critical limit for the operation.

General Studies Paper I	
A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawal of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies
General Studies Paper II	
A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these;
I	Structure, organization and functioning of the executive and the judiciary, Ministries and Departments;

J	Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions;
K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
General Studies Paper III	
A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
C	Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
D	Infrastructure Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc. Government budgeting;
E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
L	Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology;
M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
N	Developments and their applications and effects in everyday life;
O	Issues relating to intellectual property rights
P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;

T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;
V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
General Studies Paper IV	
A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
J	Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.
K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.