

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**
**STRENGTHENING OF TIES BETWEEN INDIA AND IRAN**

CONTEXT : Recently ,India-Iran discussed **strengthening of bilateral relations** and strategic affairs during delegation-level talks.

- **India-Iran Relations Historical :**

- India-Iran relations span millennia marked by meaningful interactions. The two countries shared a border till 1947 and share several common features in their language, culture and traditions.

- **Political relations**

- India and Iran signed a friendship treaty on March 15, 1950.
- Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Tehran in 2001 and signed the “Tehran Declaration” which set forth the areas of possible cooperation between the two countries.
  - It recognised then Iranian President Mohammad Khatami’s vision of a “dialogue among civilisations” as a paradigm of international relations based on principles of tolerance, pluralism and respect for diversity.
- In 2003, both sides signed “The New Delhi Declaration” which set forth the vision of strategic partnership between India and Iran.

- **Security**

- Both India and Iran also consult each other on security matters.
  - There are regular bilateral exchanges at the level of National Security Advisors and Deputy National Security Advisors.

- **Economic and Commercial Relations**

- India-Iran commercial ties were traditionally dominated by Indian import of Iranian crude oil.
- The bilateral trade during 2019-20 was \$4.77 billion, a decrease of 71.99% as compared to the trade of \$17.03 billion 2018-19.
- India’s major exports to Iran include rice, tea, sugar, soya, medicines/pharmaceuticals, man-made staple fibres, electrical machinery, etc.
- Major imports from Iran include inorganic/organic chemicals, fertilisers, cement clinkers, fruits and nuts, leather, etc.

- **Connectivity**

- During the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Tehran in May **2016**, the contract on the Shahid Beheshti port of Chabahar was signed which, inter-alia, comprises investment of \$85 million for procuring equipment of the port.
  - The contract also comprises provision of a line of credit of approximately USD 150 million for the development of the port.
  - After operations began at the Chabahar port in December 2018, the port handled more than 8200 TEUs and 1.28 million tonnes of bulk cargo.

- **Humanitarian Assistance**

- India has also helped Iran in times of natural disasters and health emergencies.
- India delivered aid that included PPE kits and PCR machines to Iran in April 2020 during the COVID-19 crisis.

- **Cultural Relations**

- An Indian Cultural Centre in Tehran was inaugurated in 2013.
- The Cultural Centre was renamed the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC) in 2018, and was provided a separate premises in 2019.
- The International Day of Yoga was organised in 2018, 2019 and 2020.
- The 550th Birth Centenary of Sri Guru Nanak was also observed. The centre conducts regular Yoga and Hindi classes.

- **People to people contacts**
  - There is a **high level commitment** in both countries to promote and facilitate people to people contacts. I
  - Indian pilgrims visit the Shi'a pilgrimage circuit in Iran (Qom, Mashhad, Hamedan) and Iraq (Najaf and Karbala) every year.

### Latest Developments

- India and Iran are keen to project themselves as independent strategic actors determined to play a role in shaping a new multipolar order in their shared Eurasian neighbourhood and also at the global level.
- Despite the difficulties posed by decades of American sanctions, Iran has, along with India, Russia and a few other countries in the Eurasian region, continued to work on the multi-modal International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).
  - India is pushing for integrating Chabahar into the 13-nation INSTC.
- The two sides had pledged to redouble their efforts to build the railway line between Iran's Caspian port of Rasht and Astara on the Iran-Azerbaijan border.
  - The 130-km line will connect the railway networks of Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia.
  - The activation of an alternative Caspian Sea route speaks volumes about the positive outlook of Iran, India and Russia on this corridor despite a variety of geopolitical challenges.
- Finally, against the backdrop of the Russian war in Ukraine, and western sanctions, Iran has also been keen to convince New Delhi to restore its crude oil purchases, which it cancelled in 2019, after threats of U.S. sanctions.

### Concerns for India

- **US sanctions**
  - The sanctions imposed by the US on Iran after Tehran withdrew from the nuclear deal in 2018 may have virtually destroyed India-Iran trade, especially India's energy imports from Iran.
- **Anti-Iran coalition**
  - Ties also appeared to have been hit by New Delhi's surprise decision to join the Israel-India-UAE-U.S. group, portrayed as an "anti-Iran" coalition, and by perceptions of Iranian support to Yemeni Houthis behind the drone attack on a UAE oil facility where an Indian was among those killed.
- **Strategic stakes**
  - Iran also happens to be the entry point for India for trade with the Central Asian countries where India's geographical approach is limited.
  - With the increasing presence of China in Iran, India has been concerned about the strategic stakes of the Chabahar port project.
    - The access to the Chabahar port may prove strategically important for India.
    - Chinese closer ties with oil producers can bring governance and energy security issues for India.

### Conclusion and Way Forward

- India abstained during the recent voting on the resolution by the US and its allies to censure Iran at the IAEA.
  - This is in keeping with its stance of resolving the issue through dialogue.
  - The revival of the nuclear deal could give a fillip to India's economic ties with Iran
- India and Iran need to rebuild their ties affected adversely by recent global events.
- India must try to remain politically engaged with Iran for a better appreciation of each other's sensitivities and compulsions and mutual interests.
- It is extremely important for India to take the lead in creating an institutional structure with Iran and Afghanistan and seriously pursue the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project to ensure energy security.

**PRELIMS**

**1. Demolition Drives & Rule of Law**

Recent demolition drives in the aftermath of the Prophet remarks row may challenge certain basic tenets of law.

**Key Points**

- **Current issue:**
  - Justice Gowda is one of the 12 signatories of a letter urging the Supreme Court to take suo motu cognisance of the demolitions in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Tenets of Laws include:**
  - The right of a person to be heard first, and
  - That the state can deprive a person of his or her property only after following due procedure and under the authority of a valid law as mandated under Article 300A of the Constitution.
- **Supreme Court's stand:** The right to property under Article 300A is a human right.
- **High Court's stand:** Article 300A is a potent right. Demolitions were a product of the politicisation of the bureaucracy. Acts like demolition were a nuclear button held against problem creators.
- A plea by Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind in the Supreme Court contended that the demolition of properties carried out by the Uttar Pradesh government in retaliation was in breach of the laws enacted by the state legislature itself.
  - It referred to Section 10 of the Uttar Pradesh (Regulation of Building Operations) Act of 1958 which mandates that a building should not be demolished without giving the affected parties "a reasonable opportunity of being heard".
  - Section 27 of the Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act, 1973 requires the affected person to be heard and given 15 days' prior notice before proceeding with the demolition.
  - Besides this, the Act allows a person aggrieved with the order of demolition to appeal within 30 days.

**2. ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers Meet**

The Special ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting (SAIFMM) is hosted by India.

**More about the event:**

- The SAIFMM is the first ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) hosted by India in New Delhi.
  - It marked two major anniversaries:
    - The 30th anniversary of India's dialogue relations with ASEAN.
    - The 10th anniversary of India's Strategic Partnership with ASEAN.
  - Myanmar was not the part of the event.
- ASEAN-India Friendship year:
  - The year 2022 has also been designated as the ASEAN-India Friendship year.
- ASEAN-India Senior Officials meeting:
  - 24th ASEAN-India Senior Officials meeting also took place in New Delhi on June 15th, 2022.
- Track 1.5 Dialogue:
  - The 12th edition of Delhi Dialogue (DD) followed the SAIFMM in New Delhi.
  - The theme this year of DD-XII is "Building Bridges in the Indo-Pacific".

**Outcomes of the meeting**

- **Global challenges:**
  - ASEAN countries agreed to uphold multilateralism in jointly responding to the regional and global challenges
  - Ukraine crisis and its knock-on effects on food, energy security, prices of fertilisers and commodities as well as logistics and supply chains.

- **China's assertiveness in the region:**
  - The ASEAN reaffirmed the “commitment to multilateralism founded on the principles of the international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other relevant UN treaties and conventions, maintain an open and inclusive regional cooperation framework, support ASEAN Centrality in the evolving rules-based regional architecture, uphold multilateralism in jointly responding to regional and global challenges.

### 3. **Mega 5G Spectrum Auction**

Recently, the Union Cabinet has approved the auction of airwaves capable of offering fifth generation, or 5G, telecom services, including ultra high-speed Internet. The Union Cabinet gave its nod for setting up captive 5G networks by big tech firms.

#### **Spectrum Auctions**

- Devices such as cellphones and wireline telephones require signals to connect from one end to another.
- These signals are carried on airwaves, which must be sent at designated frequencies to avoid any kind of interference.
- The Union government owns all the publicly available assets within the geographical boundaries of the country, which also include airwaves.
- With the expansion in the number of cellphone, wireline telephone and internet users, the need to provide more space for the signals arises from time to time.
- To sell these assets to companies willing to set up the required infrastructure to transport these waves from one end to another, the central government through the DoT auctions these airwaves from time to time.
- These airwaves are called spectrum, which is subdivided into bands which have varying frequencies.
- All these airwaves are sold for a certain period of time, after which their validity lapses, which is generally set at 20 years.

#### **5G Spectrum**

- **About 5G Technology:**
  - It is the latest upgrade in the Long-Term Evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks with reduced latency than 4G.
    - 5G technology offers an extremely low latency rate, the delay between the sending and receiving information.
    - From 200 milliseconds for 4G, 5G brings it down to 1 millisecond(1ms).
- **It works in three bands of the spectrum with their respective pros and cons.**
  - **Low Band Spectrum**
    - It shows great promise in terms of coverage and speed of internet and data exchange with a maximum speed limited to 100 Mbps (Megabits per second).
    - Telcos can use and install it for commercial cellphone users who may not have specific demands for very high-speed internet.
    - It may not be optimal for the specialised needs of the industry.
  - **Mid-Band Spectrum**
    - It offers higher speeds compared to the low band but has limitations in terms of coverage area and penetration of signals.
    - It may be used by industries and specialised factory units for building captive networks that can be moulded into the needs of that particular industry.
  - **High-Band Spectrum**
    - It offers the highest speed of all three bands, but has extremely limited coverage and signal penetration strength.
    - Internet speeds have been tested to be as high as 20 Gbps (gigabits per second).

- **Importance:** Operators will use a combination of different spectrum bands to deliver 5G services, and it will play a critical role in determining the speed and range of coverage.

**ANSWER WRITING****Q. Examine the Code of Ethics for civil servants in India. (150 words)****Introduction**

The Code of Ethics is a set of guidelines issued by an organization, to guide the conduct in accordance with organizational primary values and ethical standards. It includes values and principles like integrity, impartiality, accountability, devotion to duty, exemplary behavior, commitment to public service, etc. It is generally wide-ranging and non-specific, designed to provide a set of values or decision-making approaches that enable employees to make independent judgments about the most appropriate course of action.

Public servants provide services to the public, they exercise authority and manage the resources of the government. Their actions directly affect the public and the confidence that the public has in the government. Therefore, the public demands high standards of behavior and ethical conduct from public servants.

**Benefits of the code of ethics**

- Ethical codes by focusing on the character of actions of public servants help in building individual and organizational integrity.
- As foundational documents, they can provide the framework that public servants – political and civil service – use to carry out their public responsibilities.
- Codes can clearly articulate unacceptable behaviors as well as providing a vision for which the government official is striving.

The inculcation of values facilitating the subordination of the self to a larger societal good, and engendering a spirit of empathy for those in need of ameliorative state interventions are not skills which could be easily imbibed after joining the civil services. Such attitudes need nurturing over not merely individual lifetimes but through successive generations. Thus the Code of ethics can provide guidance on ethical conduct and regulate the behavior of public servants and other public officials.

**Conclusion**

It is important that the code of ethics should be grounded in the notion of responsibility and accountability. In a democracy, every holder of public office is accountable ultimately to the people. The code of ethics provides guidance on how public servants should uphold the highest standards of constitutional and ethical conduct in the performance of their duties. It should be based on the overarching duty of public servants to comply with the law, to uphold the administration of justice and to protect the integrity of public life.

**QUIZ**

1. Consider the following statements regarding One Health Framework.
  1. The One Health Framework is aimed at improving national and State-level resource allocation and policy ecosystem on early prediction, detection, and diagnosis of zoonotic diseases.
  2. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) has launched One Health programme throughout India, for establishing an inter-sectoral coordination mechanism at the central and State-levels.
  3. One Health is a collaborative, multisectoral approach with the goal of achieving optimal health outcomes by recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) **1 and 3 only**
- (d) 2 and 3 only

2. Language Model for Dialogue Applications (LaMDA), is an artificial intelligence (AI) based chatbot, developed by
- Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Google**
  - Amazon
3. **Consider the following statements with respect to 'Press Council of India'**
1. It is a statutory organization operating under the Press Council Act of 1978
  2. The Council shall have the same powers throughout India as are vested in a civil court while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure
  3. The Chairman of the Council is nominated by the Chief Justice of India
- Choose the correct answer using the code given below**
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 and 3 only
  - (c) 1 and 2 only**
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
4. **With reference to 'Cost Inflation Index', consider the following statements**
1. It is an index that is used to calculate the inflation-adjusted rise in the value of an asset including debt mutual funds
  2. It is notified by the Reserve Bank of India based on inputs from National Statistics Office
  3. The CII value can also be used to calculate Long Term Capital Gain (LTCG) on equity mutual funds
- Choose the correct answer using the code given below**
- (a) 1 only**
  - (b) 2 and 3 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
5. **Consider the following statements regarding 'All India Women's Conference'**
1. It was founded by Margaret Cousins in order to improve educational efforts for women and children
  2. Sarojini Naidu was the first Indian to be elected as the President of AIWC
- Select the correct statement(s)**
- (a) 1 only**
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2