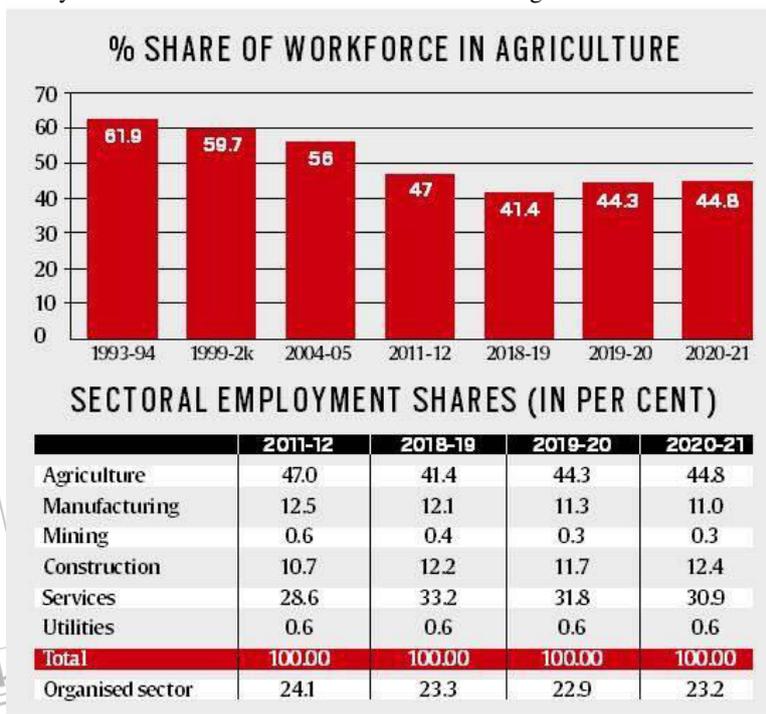


ECONOMY

❖ **India's unique jobs crisis**

- The share of India's working population engaged in farming has fallen quite significantly during the last three decades.
- In 1993-94, agriculture accounted for close to 62% of the country's employed labour force. That proportion – based on data from the National Statistical Office's Periodic Labour Force (previously known as 'employment and unemployment') Surveys – dropped almost six percentage points by 2004-05 and even more (9 percentage points) over the next seven years. The declining trend continued, albeit at a slower pace, in the subsequent seven as well.
- Overall, between 1993-94 and 2018-19, agriculture's share in India's workforce came down from 61.9% to 41.4% . In other words, roughly a third in 25 years. That isn't insignificant.
- According to an estimates that given its level of per capita GDP in 2018 – and comparing with the average for other countries in the same income bracket – India's farm sector should be employing 33-34% of the total workforce. 41.4% may not be a substantial deviation from the average.



❖ **Weak structural transformation**

- There's been a reversal of the trend in the last two years, which has seen the share of those employed in farms rise to 44-45%. This has primarily to do with the Covid-induced economic disruptions. The Periodic Labour Force Survey years are from July to June.
- The 2019-20 survey results will, hence, also cover the first lockdown period from late-March to end-June 2020. The reverse migration of people back to the farms should be a temporary blip, though, with the surveys from 2021-22 hopefully revealing a restoration of the long-term trend.
- Secondly, even the movement of workforce from agriculture that India has witnessed over the past three decades or more does not qualify as what economists call "structural transformation". Such transformation would involve the transfer of labour from farming to sectors – particularly manufacturing and modern services – where productivity, value-addition and average incomes are higher.
- However, the share of manufacturing (and mining) in total employment has actually fallen along with that of agriculture. The surplus labour pulled out from the farms is being largely absorbed in construction and services. While the services sector does include relatively well-paying industries — such as information technology, business process outsourcing, telecommunications, finance, healthcare, education and public administration — the bulk of the jobs in this case are in petty retailing, small eateries, domestic help, sanitation, security staffing, transport and similar other informal economic activities. This is also evident from the low, if not declining, share of employment in organised enterprises, defined as those engaging 10 or more workers.
- The structural transformation process in India has been weak and deficient.
- There is movement of labour taking place away from farms – even if stalled, possibly temporarily. But that surplus labour isn't moving to higher value-added non-farm activities, specifically manufacturing and modern services (the familiar 'Kuznets Process' named after the American economist and 1971 Nobel Memorial Prize winner, Simon Kuznets).

- The labour transfer is happening within the low-productivity informal economy. The jobs that are getting generated outside agriculture are mostly in low-paid services and construction; the latter's share in employment has even overtaken that of manufacturing.
- Weak structural transformation and persistence of informality also explains the tendency, especially by rural families, for pursuing multiple livelihoods. Many of them cling on to their small plots of lands, even while earning incomes wholly or predominantly from non-farm sources.
- It is these very tiny holdings, along with free government food rations, that saved the day during the post-Covid economic collapse.
- ❖ **A picture in contrast**
- Between March 31, 2020 and June 30, 2022, the combined employee headcount at India's top five IT companies (Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Wipro, HCL Technologies and Tech Mahindra) has gone up from 11.55 lakh to 15.69 lakh. That's a jump of 4.14 lakh or nearly 36% – entirely in the period post the pandemic, when most other sectors, barring agriculture, were shedding jobs and slashing salaries.
- The IT industry is clearly an isolated island of the Indian economy that added jobs during the pandemic and is continuing to do so. The five companies above, put together, have more employees than the 12.5 lakh and 14.1 lakh currently on the rolls of the Indian Railways and the three defense services, respectively. And with revenue per employee at Rs 34.5 lakh — the average for the big five during the year ended March 31, 2022 — this is also a high-productivity industry that is able to pay reasonably good salaries.
- Much of the IT sector's recent success is courtesy of exports. These have, in fact, boomed due to Covid's triggering increased demand for digitisation even among businesses that were hitherto slow in adoption: India's net exports of software services have surged from \$84.64 billion in 2019-20 to \$109.54 billion in 2021-22.

POLITY

- ❖ **PM and President's photos in govt ads: Supreme Court ruling, High Court interpretation**
- ❖ **CONTEXT:** Recently the Madras High Court directed the Tamil Nadu government to include the photographs of the President of India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in advertisements on the 44th Chess Olympiad underway in Chennai. The HC relied on a 2015 Supreme Court ruling that issued guidelines on government spending on advertisements.
- ❖ **What was the 2015 ruling?**
- In *Common Cause v Union of India*, the Supreme Court sought to regulate the way the government spends on advertisements. It essentially regulated the 2007 New Advertisement Policy of the Government of India.
- The petitioners had argued that there is arbitrary spending on advertisements by the government. The allegations ranged from wastage of public money for political mileage to using advertisements as a tool to manipulate media.
- According to the court "since the primary cause of government advertisement is to use public funds to inform the public of their rights, obligations, and entitlements as well as to explain Government policies, programs, services and initiatives, however, when these requisites are not fulfilled in a government advertisement then the whole purpose would be frustrated.
- "Patronization of any particular media house(s) must be avoided and award of advertisements must be on an equal basis to all newspapers who may, however, be categorized depending upon their circulation.
- The DAVP (Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity) guidelines do not deal with the said aspect of the matter and hence the necessity of incorporating the same in the present directions to ensure the independence, impartiality and the neutrality of the fourth estate which is vital to the growth and sustenance of democracy will have to be weighed and considered.
- A three-judge Bench comprising then Chief Justice of India P Sathasivam, and Justices Ranjan Gogoi and N V Ramana had set up a committee to suggest a better policy.
- ❖ **What did the committee suggest?**
- The three-member committee — comprising Prof N R Madhava Menon, former Director, National Judicial Academy, Bhopal; T K Viswanathan, former Secretary General, Lok Sabha, and senior advocate Ranjit Kumar — suggested a fresh policy — the Government Advertisements (Content Regulation) Guidelines 2014 with five broad principles:
 - Advertising campaigns are to be related to government responsibilities
 - Materials should be presented in an objective, fair manner and designed to meet objectives of the campaign
 - Advertisements must not directed at promoting political interests of a party
 - campaigns must be justified and undertaken in a cost-effective manner
 - Advertisements must comply with legal requirements and financial regulations
- ❖ **What did the Supreme Court rule?**
- It largely accepted the committee report except on a few issues — the appointment of an ombudsman to oversee the implementation of the guidelines, a special performance audit of government spending, and an embargo on publication of advertisements on the eve of elections.
- The ruling mandated that government advertisements will not contain a political party's symbol, logo or flag and are required to be politically neutral and must refrain from glorifying political personalities.

❖ **What about photographs in advertisements?**

- The Supreme Court agreed with the committee's suggestion "that photographs of leaders should be avoided and only the photographs of the President/ Prime Minister or Governor/ Chief Minister shall be used for effective government messaging".
- Then Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi had opposed the recommendation arguing that if the PM's photograph is allowed in the advertisement, then the same right should be available to his cabinet colleagues as the PM is the "first among the equals".
- The court, while restricting the recommendation to the photos of the President and Prime Minister, added the photograph of the Chief Justice of India to that list of exceptions.
- The court in departure to the views of the Committee which recommended permissibility of publication of the photographs of the President and Prime Minister of the country and Governor or Chief Minister of the State along with the advertisements, there should be an exception only in the case of the President, Prime Minister and Chief Justice of the country who may themselves decide the question. Advertisements issued to commemorate the anniversaries of acknowledged personalities like the father of the nation would of course carry the photograph of the departed leader.
- In 2018, the Centre and states including Karnataka, West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Chattisgarh sought a review of the verdict on the ground that not permitting the publication of the CM's photograph would violate the federal structure. An SC Bench comprising Justices Gogoi and P C Ghose relaxed the bar, allowing pictures of Union ministers, Chief Ministers, Governors and State ministers in government advertisements.

❖ **What are the takeaways from the SC and HC verdicts?**

- The SC ruling stepped into content regulation, which is a facet of the right to freedom of speech and expression, and was also in the domain of making policy. This raised questions on the judiciary stepping on the executive's domain.
- The SC ruling did not mandate publication of the photograph of the PM and President, but only restricts publication of photos of government officials other than the President, PM, CJI, CM and the Governor.
- In an opposition-ruled state such as Tamil Nadu, exclusion of the PM's photos is seen as a political move.
- The Tamil Nadu government told the court that since the Presidential elections had not concluded, it did not include the photos of the President and that there was a delay in receiving consent from the PM's office on including his photograph. The HC said that considering the "national interest" in the issue, the "excuses taken by the state" cannot be accepted.

❖ **The need for a distinction between blasphemy and hate speech**

- ❖ **CONTEXT: While Mohammad Zubair of Alt News was arrested for tweeting a still picture from a movie that had some religious context attached to it, Nupur Sharma, a member of the BJP, has been absconding with no coercive action taken against her for her inflammatory remarks on a prime-time TV show. Have the inadequacies of free speech laws been exemplified in these cases? What regulations govern criticism versus hate speech?**

❖ **What is the history of Section 295 (A)?**

- As far as laws in India go, there isn't formal legislation against blasphemy. The closest equivalent to a blasphemy law is Section 295(A) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which punishes any speech, writings, or signs that "with premeditated and malicious intent" insult citizens' religion or religious beliefs with a fine and imprisonment for up to three years.
- The history of Section 295(A) of the IPC can be traced back to 95 years. In 1927, a satire was published which had obscene parallels to the Prophet's personal life. It was indeed very offensive to the Muslim community but the erstwhile High Court of Lahore observed that the author of this cannot be prosecuted as the writing did not cause animosity or hostility between any communities. Thus, the offense did not fall under Section 153(A), which dealt with maintaining public tranquility/order. However, this incident gave rise to a demand that there be a law to protect the sanctity of religions, and thus, Section 295(A) was introduced.
- The legality of Section 295(A), which had been challenged in the Ramji Lal Modi case (1957), was affirmed by a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court. The apex court reasoned that while Article 19(2) allows reasonable limits on freedom of speech and expression for the sake of public order, the punishment under Section 295(A) deals with aggravated form of blasphemy which is committed with the malicious aim of offending the religious sensibilities of any class.

❖ **How has the legislation been interpreted?**

- Down the line, the apex court redefined the test it laid down in the Ramji Lal Modi case. It decided that the connection between speech and disorder must be like a "spark in a powder keg".
- In the case of Superintendent, Central Prison, Fatehgarh vs Ram Manohar Lohia the Supreme Court stated that the link between the speech spoken and any public disorder caused as a result of it should have a close relationship for retrieving Section 295(A) of IPC.

- By 2011, it concluded that only speech that amounts to "incitement to impending unlawful action" can be punished. That is, the state must meet a very high bar before using public disturbance as a justification for suppressing expression.
- ❖ **Should there be a difference between blasphemy laws and hate speech laws?**
- The wording of Section 295(A) is considerably too wide. It cannot be stated that deliberate disrespect to religion or religious sensibilities is necessarily tantamount to incitement.
- The Supreme Court has said on several occasions that perhaps the goal of hate speech statutes in Section 295(A) is to prevent prejudice and ensure equality.
- Unfortunately, there is a huge disparity between this interpretation and the actual wording due to which the law is still being exploited at all levels of administration.
- Insulting religion or religious figures may be disputed or condemned but it should not be legally outlawed or prosecuted. The reason for this is because hate speech laws are predicated on the critical distinction between criticising or ridiculing religion and encouraging prejudice or aggression towards individuals or a community because of their faith.
- ❖ **Are hate speech cases rising?**
- As per the data given by the National Crime Records Bureau(NCRB), there has been a huge increase in cases registered promoting hate speech and fostering animosity in society. The data reads that while there were only 323 cases registered in 2014, it had increased to 1,804 cases in 2020.
- However, this can also be due to the steep turns in the dynamics of our current society. Section 295(A) is now usually used to penalise religious dissent, satire, and any comedic content with religious references.
- Bogus cases of 295(A) have been launched on certain web series like Tandav, which reportedly offended religious emotions. According to the filed FIR, the series purportedly presents Hindu gods in a demeaning manner.
- There have also been incidents where citizens performing stand-up comedy have been arrested only because they had religious references in their script.
- The inadequacies of the rules of free speech are further exemplified in the previously mentioned cases of Mohammad Zubair and Nupur Sharma.
- These cases show how regulations don't draw a line between criticism and premeditated hate speech. Failing to articulate these distinctions diminishes fair use of the Section and makes it more difficult to define and penalise the actual crime of hate speech.
- ❖ **How should one deal with incidents of blasphemy?**
- Blasphemy laws which prohibit religious criticism in general are incompatible with the principles of a democratic society. In a free and democratic society, there should be no screening of discourse and dissent.
- The only feasible solution that stands on the thin line of protection of faith and questioning hate speech should be keeping blasphemy in the statutes but de-criminalising it.

PRELIMS

1. Gluttonous Cosmic 'Black Widow'

CONTEXT: Gluttonous cosmic 'black widow' is heaviest-known neutron star.

- A neutron star is the compact collapsed core of a massive star that exploded as a supernova at the end of its life cycle. Stars that are about eight or more times the sun's mass transform hydrogen into heavier elements through thermonuclear fusion in their cores.
- When they build up about 1.4 times the mass of our sun in iron, that core collapses into a neutron star having a diameter only about the size of a city, with the rest blown off in the supernova explosion.
- Its matter is so compact that an amount about the size of a sugar cube would outweigh Mount Everest.
- **Black Widow** - the Astronomers have observed a most massive neutron star, classified as a "black widow". It got particularly hefty by gobbling up most of the mass of a stellar companion trapped in an unhappy cosmic marriage.
- It means its gravitational pull has poached material from its companion star enabling it to grow to a mass at the uppermost limit before it would collapse into a black hole.
- It has a mass 2.35 times greater than that of our sun and is spinning at 707 times per second.
- This is perhaps the maximum possible mass for such objects before they collapse to form a black hole.
- The one discovered now is highly magnetized type of neutron star called a pulsar.
- It unleashes beams of electromagnetic radiation from its poles. As it spins, these beams appear akin to a lighthouse's rotating light.
- The heavier the neutron star, the denser the material in its core.
- The neutron star, resides in our Milky Way galaxy in the direction of the constellation Sextans.
- It is formally named as PSR J0952-0607 and is located roughly 20,000 light years from Earth.

2. Karikiyoor Rock Paintings

CONTEXT: Researchers have discovered 5000 year old rock paintings at Karikiyoor in Nilgiris.

- The Karikiyoor rock paintings is a series of over 300 images etched on the side of the cliff-face in Kothagiri. It is located in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu.
- A variety of subjects are depicted in great detail. It includes
 - Communities that lived in the area at that time
 - The wildlife they witnessed and their relationships with them
 - The battles with other communities
- No scientific dating has been done on the site. It is believed to be more than 5,000-years old.
- These images are all drawn using earthen paints.
- The images depict a gradual shift from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle in the initial drawings to a pastoral and, eventually, a settled agrarian lifestyle in the later drawings.
- The shift indicates that the rock art site got added on by different groups at different stages in its history.
- James Wilkinson Breeks, a civil servant has documented 18 distinct rock art sites in his book “An Account of the Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the Nilagiris.”
- Local indigenous communities, especially the Irulas and the Kurumbas, have an attachment to the sites. Most of these sites are located near the settlements of these aboriginal groups.
- They believe the sites are the ancestral abodes of their forefathers, and this belief has helped in conserving these sites so far.
- The Kurumbas claim a link to Vellarikombai rock art site while in Karikiyoor and Sigur, the rock art sites are claimed by the Irulas.
- Vandals have defaced some of the rock art, painting political and religious symbols on the images.

ANSWER WRITTING

Q. Describe the benefits of deriving electric energy from sunlight in contrast to the conventional energy generation. What are the initiatives offered by our Government for this purpose?

It has been known for more than 150 years that light can have an effect on the electrical properties of some materials. This is called the photoelectric effect. In 1921, Einstein received the Nobel Prize for his work explaining this. Photovoltaic cells are based on a related phenomenon called the photovoltaic effect, and they convert light directly into electricity.

Benefits of obtaining electric energy from sunlight

1. Impact on the Environment: Solar energy has the least negative impact on the environment compared to any other energy source. It does not produce greenhouse gases and does not pollute the water.
2. Reduce Your Energy Bill: Generating your own electricity means that you will be using less from the utility supplier. This will immediately translate to savings on your energy bill. Plus, you can also make money by selling the unused electricity, which you have generated, back to the grid.
3. Solar Energy Is Applicable Everywhere: As long as there is sunshine, solar energy can be deployed anywhere. This is particularly useful for remote regions with no access to any other source of electricity. There is a vast amount of people around the world with no access to electricity.
4. Less Electricity Lost During Long-Distance Transport: Having solar panels on the roof or in the yard significantly reduces this distance, therefore increasing the efficiency of the solar panels.
5. Improves Grid Security: The grid is less vulnerable to blackouts if there are many power plants which are spread out. A grid with high penetration of solar energy has thousands of energy production centres which are widely spread out. This improves the security of the grid in case of overload, natural or human-caused disasters.

Disadvantages of obtaining electric energy from conventional sources

1. Pollution: The primary drawback of these conventional sources is they produce excessive pollutants. The burning of firewood and fossil fuels result in air pollutants. This may be prevented by means of using those non-conventional resources.
2. Exhaustible: The major problem while the use of conventional sources in particular fossil fuels is that they may be exhaustible resources. It takes tens of millions of years for them to be renewed and replenished. But non-traditional resources are renewable resources that do not get exhausted.
3. Risky: Non-conventional power extraction is safer. Many injuries arise at the same time as extracting strength from mines.
4. High value: The extraction of these electricity assets is very pricey both economically and environmentally. The cost of electricity production and extraction is lots lesser for non-traditional resources if the initial cost of establishment is borne.

Initiatives offered by our Government for this purpose

1. Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission: The aim of JNNSM mission is not limited to offering large-scale grid-connected power but also transform India’s rural economy. The quick spread of solar lighting systems, water pumps, and other solar power-based applications will change India’s rural economy. The mission is to expand and establish India as a global leader in solar energy sector.
2. Rooftop Scheme: Under the rooftop scheme executed by SECI (Solar Energy Corporation of India), 200 MW of projects has been allocated, out of which 45 MW of capacity have been commissioned. Addition to this, special

schemes including 73 MW for warehouses and 50 MW for the CPWD (Central Public Works Department) have been launched.

3. Solar Park Scheme: The Solar Park is a concentrated zone of development of solar power generation projects. The implementation agency would be SECI on behalf of Government of India. The state will be able to reduce its carbon footprint by avoiding emissions equivalent to the solar park's generated capacity.

4. VGF (Viability Gap Funding) Scheme: VGF support will be provided for setting up of grid-connected solar PV projects of a minimum 2000 MW capacity by solar power developers on build own operate basis.

5. UDAY Scheme: UDAY or Ujjwal Discom Assurance Yojna was launched in November 2015 as a revival package for electricity distribution companies of India initiated by the Government of India with the idea to find permanent solar power solutions to the financial mess that the power distribution was facing at that time. It aims at reforming the power sector, operational improvement, and development in renewable energy, reduction of cost of generation of power, energy efficiency, and conservation.

Conclusion: Solar power is an immense source of directly useable energy and ultimately creates other energy resources: biomass, wind, and hydropower and wave energy. Most of the Earth's surface receives sufficient solar energy to permit low-grade heating of water and buildings, although there are large variations with latitude and season. At low latitudes, simple mirror devices can concentrate solar energy sufficiently for cooking and even for driving steam turbines.

MCQs

- Karikiyoor rock paintings recently seen in news is associated with which of the following?
 - Nilagiris hills**
 - Aravali
 - Garo hills
 - Charandri hills
- The term "PSR J0952-0607" frequently in news is related to which of the following?
 - Galaxy
 - Comet
 - Neutron star**
 - Nebula
- Consider the following statements
 - In recent context agriculture accounted for close to 62% of the country's employed labour force
 - Agriculture's share in India's workforce came down significantly during the last three decades.
 Select the correct statement using the codes given below
 - 1 only
 - 2 only**
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- Arrange the following in ascending order with reference to India's sectoral employment share in percentage in recent context
 - Agriculture
 - Service
 - Construction
 - Mining
 Choose the correct answer using the codes given below
 - 1,5,4,3,2
 - 3,2,4,5,1
 - 5,2,3,1,2
 - 4,5,3,2,1**
- Which of the following can be associated with hate speech in India?
 - Representation of People's Act 1951
 - Section 295(A) of IPC
 - Viswanathan Committee
 Choose the correct answer using the codes given below
 - 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - All of the above**
- Orunodoi scheme is a Direct cash transfer scheme to EWS women which was recently in news due to an additional amount of cash added for the month of August to buy National flag in Independence day, Which of the following state is associated with this scheme?
 - Odisha
 - Arunachal Pradesh
 - Assam**
 - Andhra Pradesh
- Long March 5B Rocket recently in news is belongs to which of the following country?
 - USA
 - China**
 - Russia
 - Ukraine
- Consider the following statements with regards to Electoral Bonds
 - The bonds are issued by only SBI in denominations of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1lakh, Rs 10 lakh and Rs 1crore
 - Electoral bonds are purchased anonymously by donors and are valid for 15 days from the date of issue
 Choose the incorrect statement/s using the codes given below
 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2**
- Bill Russell died recently is related to which of the following sports?
 - Football
 - Basket ball**
 - Cricket
 - Tennis
- Monarch butterfly recently seen in news Consider the following statement with regards to it
 - Recently monarch butterfly is listed as endangered by IUCN.
 - The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has added it to its 'red list' for the first time.
 Choose the correct statement using the codes given below
 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2