

GS PAPER 2 – INDIAN POLITY – JUDICIARY**Supreme Court of India warned judges against making biased or sexist comments**

The article discusses how the Supreme Court of India warned judges against making biased or sexist comments. It emphasizes the need for judges to be fair and to uphold constitutional values. The court aims to combat gender stereotyping and ensure a bias-free judicial system for all communities.

Why Did the Supreme Court Reprimand Judges?

1. The Supreme Court reprimanded judges for making biased and inappropriate remarks during proceedings.
2. It cited examples like Karnataka High Court Judge V. Srishananda, who made sexist comments and referred to a Muslim area as 'Pakistan'.
3. The court emphasized that such remarks violate constitutional values and harm the judiciary's image.

What is the Importance of Fairness in Judging?

1. The Supreme Court stressed that fairness is the heart and soul of judging.
2. Judges must strictly follow constitutional values and avoid prejudice.
3. Casual remarks, or biased comments can negatively impact the public's view of the judiciary.

What Initiatives Have Been Taken to Combat Bias?

1. **Suo Motu Cognizance:** The Supreme Court took action against Judge V. Srishananda for his sexist comments and referring to a Muslim area as 'Pakistan'.
2. **Handbook Against Gender Stereotyping:** In 2023, the Court released a handbook to combat gender bias, suggesting alternative, gender-neutral terms.
3. **Live-Streaming Caution:** The live-streaming of court proceedings has increased the reach of judicial remarks, making it essential for judges to be mindful of their words.
4. **Public Caution:** The Court cautioned Punjab and Haryana High Court judges for making unwarranted remarks, reinforcing the importance of fair language during proceedings.

GS PAPER 2- INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS-BILATERAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL GROUPINGS AND AGREEMENTS INVOLVING INDIA AND/OR AFFECTING INDIA'S INTERESTS**Indian Oil Companies' Dividend Income Stuck in Russia**

The article discusses how Indian oil companies are unable to access \$900 million in dividend income from investments in Russian projects. Western sanctions on Russia, including banking restrictions, make it difficult to transfer or use these funds.

How Much Investment Has India Made in Russian Oil Projects?

1. India has invested over \$6 billion in Russian oil and gas projects.
2. ONGC Videsh (OVL) holds a 20% stake in the Sakhalin-1 project and a 26% stake in the Vankor project.
3. A consortium of Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Oil India (OIL), and Bharat PetroResources (BPRL) holds a 23.9% share in the Vankor project.
4. The same consortium has a 29.9% stake in the Taas-Yuryakh oil field project.
5. These investments were made to secure energy for India, which relies heavily on oil imports to meet its energy needs.

Why is Indian Oil Companies' Dividend Income Stuck in Russia?

1. Indian oil companies have \$900 million in dividend income stuck in Russia, including \$600-650 million from IOC-OIL-BPRL and \$250 million from ONGC Videsh (OVL).
2. This money is trapped in Commercial Indo Bank (CIBL) (an affiliate of State Bank of India (SBI)) accounts in Moscow due to Western sanctions imposed on Russia after the Ukraine war started in 2022.
3. The sanctions include restrictions on financial transaction systems like SWIFT, making it difficult to transfer the funds out of Russia.
4. The investments are structured through special purpose vehicles based in countries like Singapore, complicating cross-border payments.
5. These funds cannot be easily used for operational needs or to purchase Russian oil due to international legal, taxation, and accounting challenges.

What Are the Possible Solutions?

1. The solution will likely require a combination of diplomacy and commercial negotiations between India, Russia, and other stakeholders.
2. Legal and international accounting experts are being consulted to find a viable path forward.

GS PAPER 2- GOVERNANCE -IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF GOVERNANCE**Concerns About the Police encounter in Thane**

The article discusses a controversial police encounter in Thane, where a rape accused was killed inside a police vehicle. It questions the legitimacy of the encounter, highlights political implications, and raises concerns about fake encounters targeting the poor for political gain.

What Concerns Were Raised About the Police encounter in Thane?

1. **Unusual Deployment:** It is not common to assign a senior inspector for prisoner escort duty. Both the senior and junior inspectors' presence seemed unnecessary, raising suspicions about the purpose of the assignment.
2. **Suspicious Circumstances:** The accused, reportedly handcuffed and with his face covered, allegedly snatched a police officer's pistol. This seems unlikely and makes the police account questionable.

- Past Record of the Senior Inspector:** The officer who shot the accused has a controversial past. His dismissal was once recommended for helping a gangster relative escape custody, which questions his credibility.
- Comparison to Similar Cases:** The Thane encounter resembles the Hyderabad case, where police killed four rape accused. That case was later found to have significant flaws, casting doubt on such encounters.
- Targeting the Poor:** The article notes that fake encounters often target poor individuals, hinting that the accused's social status made him vulnerable to such actions.

GS PAPER-3 – SECURITY

India's legal provisions for handling FDI and international trade on national security grounds

The article discusses India's lack of a clear legal framework to handle foreign direct investment (FDI) and international trade on national security grounds. It emphasizes the need for a dedicated law, similar to global practices, to address such security risks.

What are India's legal provisions for handling foreign direct investment (FDI) and international trade on national security grounds?

- Press Note 3 (PN3) Regulation:** In April 2020, India implemented PN3 under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) to regulate FDI from neighboring countries, particularly aimed at controlling Chinese investments during the COVID-19 pandemic. PN3 requires government approval for investments from land-bordering countries.
- Comparison with Other Nations:** Countries like Canada and Australia have specific laws that directly address national security risks from FDI. For example, Canada's Investment Act which allows for screening and action against foreign investments that threaten national security.
- Legal Vacuum:** India lacks a dedicated law for FDI related to national security, using FEMA and the Customs Tariff Act as stop-gap measures. This has exposed India to potential challenges in international courts.
- International Practices:** India's international investment agreements, like the 2015 Model Bilateral Investment Treaty, separate provisions for national security from other economic concerns, underlining the absence of a comprehensive domestic law.

Has This Legal Vacuum Impacted International Trade?

- In 2019, following the Pulwama terror attack, India used Section 8A(1) of the Customs Tariff Act to impose a 200% duty on Pakistani imports. This act is generally for economic emergencies, not security threats.
- Such measures, not rooted in a clear national security framework, could be challenged in international courts.
- India's reliance on general laws like FEMA and the Customs Tariff Act, instead of dedicated security legislation, highlights a critical gap that could affect its standing and effectiveness in international trade disputes.

AIR POLLUTION GS PAPER-III

Air Pollution

Air quality in Delhi slipped into the 'poor' category (AQI 200-300) for the first time since mid-June, signalling the imminent arrival of North India's bad air season.

Air pollution data:

- Global ranking:** According to IQAir's 2023 report, India is ranked as the third most polluted country globally.
- 5 concentration:** The average PM2.5 concentration in India stands at 54.4 µg/m³.
- Economic impact:** Air pollution results in an estimated economic loss of ₹2.7 lakh crore annually, accounting for 1.36% of the GDP.

Causes of air pollution:

Natural causes:

- Wildfires and dust storms:** Natural events like wildfires and dust storms contribute to the spread of particulate matter in the air.
- Volcanic activity:** Volcanic eruptions emit gases such as Sulfur dioxide, impacting air quality regionally and globally.

Anthropogenic causes:

- Vehicular emissions:** Cars and industrial transportation are key sources of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulate matter (PM).
- Industrial emissions:** Factories release pollutants like Sulfur oxides (SOx) and carbon dioxide (CO2), contributing to local and global air pollution.
- Stubble burning:** Common in Punjab, Haryana, and UP, this practice exacerbates pollution, especially in Delhi-NCR during winter.
- Waste burning:** Open burning of solid waste releases harmful chemicals into the air, further deteriorating air quality.
- Coal-based power plants:** These plants contribute to over half of the SO2 emissions and 30% of NOx emissions in India.

Impact of air pollution:

- Health:** It causes respiratory issues, heart disease, and premature deaths, with PM2.5 being the most harmful pollutant.
- Environment:** Air pollution leads to acid rain, which damages crops and ecosystems, and contributes to climate change.

- Economic Loss: According to the World Bank, air pollution causes a significant reduction in workforce productivity, GDP growth, and healthcare costs.

Measures to control air pollution:

1. Technological interventions:

- Air quality monitoring: Enhancing infrastructure for real-time air quality monitoring can help with early warnings and targeted actions.
- Emission norms: Strengthening and expanding Bharat Stage VI norms for vehicles, along with the promotion of electric vehicles (EVs), can help reduce emissions.
- Use of renewable energy: Transitioning from coal-based power plants to solar, wind, and other renewable sources can reduce harmful emissions.

2. Policy interventions:

- National Clean Air Programme (NCAP): Aimed at reducing PM2.5 levels by 20-40% by 2026, NCAP emphasizes coordinated efforts across states and sectors.
- Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP): Especially for Delhi-NCR, GRAP implements emergency measures during severe pollution episodes.
- Stubble management programs: Encouraging farmers to adopt alternative methods to burning, like using bio-decomposers, can mitigate seasonal pollution spikes.

3. Community and behavioral changes:

- Public awareness: Awareness campaigns on the health impacts of air pollution and encouraging citizens to adopt cleaner practices like carpooling and waste segregation.
- Green urban spaces: Expanding green belts in urban areas can help absorb pollutants and improve overall air quality.

Best global practices:

- Singapore's Green Plan: Aimed at achieving net-zero emissions and reducing air pollution through sustainable urban planning, electric vehicle incentives, and strong public transportation systems.
- London's Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ): A system that charges vehicles that do not meet emissions standards, helping to reduce city pollution significantly.

Conclusion:

India's air pollution crisis requires a sustained, multi-sectoral approach that prioritizes long-term solutions over short-term optics. Drawing inspiration from global best practices, India must focus on integrating scientific methods, technological solutions, and public engagement to tackle air pollution effectively.

PRELIM FACTS

1. Vembanad Lake

The 70th edition of the Nehru Trophy Boat Race (NTBR) will be held in Punnamada Lake in Alappuzha district of Kerala.

About Vembanad Lake

- Vembanad Lake is the largest lake in Kerala and the longest lake in India.
- **Multiple Names:** It is known by various names in different regions:
 - Vembanad Kayal in the northern regions.
 - Vembanad Kol in Kuttanad.
 - Punnamada Lake in Alappuzha.
 - Kochi Lake in the Kochi area.
- **Source of the Lake:** The lake is fed by four rivers: **Meenachil, Achankovil, Pampa, and Manimala.**
- **Geographical Importance:** The lake is separated from the Arabian Sea by a narrow barrier island, contributing to its significance as a backwater stretch, which is a hallmark of Kerala's tourism.
- **Vallam Kali (Nehru Trophy Boat Race):** The Vallam Kali, or Snake Boat Race, takes place annually in the lake, with the Nehru Trophy Boat Race being a major attraction, held in Punnamada Lake, a part of Vembanad.
- **Ramsar Site:** Vembanad Lake was included in the Ramsar Convention in 2002, recognizing it as a wetland of international importance.
 - It is the **second-largest Ramsar site in India**, following the Sundarbans in West Bengal.
- **Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary:** Located on the eastern shores of Vembanad Lake, the sanctuary attracts migratory birds from all over the world.

2. India becomes 3rd Most Powerful Nation in Asia

In a major shift, **India surpassed Japan** to become the **third-largest power in the Asia Power Index**, reflecting its increasing geopolitical stature.

Key Factors Behind India's Rise:

- **Economic Growth:** India's post-pandemic economic recovery led to a **4.2-point rise** in Economic Capability.
 - It is now the world's **third-largest economy** in terms of **Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).**

- **Future Potential:** India's youthful population led to an **8.2-point rise** in Future Resources, signalling demographic advantage compared to **ageing populations in China and Japan**.
- **Diplomatic Influence:** India ranked **6th** in **diplomatic dialogues** in 2023, with active engagement in multilateral forums.
 - **Strong leadership** and India's **non-aligned strategic posture** enhanced its global standing.
- **Cultural Influence:** India's **global diaspora and cultural exports** remain strong, reinforcing soft power.

About Asia Power Index:

- Launched by the **Lowy Institute** in 2018, the Index assesses power dynamics in the **Asia-Pacific region**.
- It evaluates **27 countries across the Asia-Pacific**, examining their ability to shape and respond to the external environment.
- The **2024 edition** offers one of the **most comprehensive assessments of power distribution** in the region to date.
 - **Timor-Leste** has been included for the **first time**, reflecting its growing **importance in Southeast Asia**.
- The Index focuses on both the **material capabilities of states** and the **influence they exert on the international stage**.

Criteria and Parameters of Power Measurement:

- **Resource-Based Determinants:**
 - **Economic Capability:** GDP, technological advancement, global connectivity.
 - **Military Capability:** Defense spending, armed forces strength, long-range projection.
 - **Resilience:** Institutional robustness, security, and resource stability.
 - **Future Resources:** Projected economic, military, and demographic factors by 2035.
- **Influence-Based Determinants:**
 - **Economic Relationships:** Leverage through trade and economic diplomacy.
 - **Defense Networks:** Strength of alliances and military cooperation.
 - **Diplomatic Influence:** Reach and participation in global forums.
 - **Cultural Influence:** Impact through cultural exports and international public opinion.

3. India Sugar & Bio Energy Conference

The Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and New & Renewable Energy recently addressed the India Sugar & Bio Energy Conference.

Key Highlights of the Conference

- 1. India as a Major Ethanol Player:** India is now the third-largest ethanol producer and consumer globally, driven by government policies.
- 2. Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme:** The EBP Programme has increased ethanol production, boosted sugar mill revenues, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and created jobs in rural areas through new distilleries.
- 3. Sustainable Sugar Industry:** The government is committed to a robust sugar industry that aligns with economic growth and renewable energy goals, emphasizing innovation, public-private partnerships, and farmer-centric policies.
- 4. Growth in Sugarcane:** Over the past decade, sugarcane cultivation has increased by 18% and production by 40%. The introduction of the Minimum Selling Price (MSP) in 2018 ensured timely payments to farmers.
- 5. Farmers as Energy Providers:** Farmers are evolving from "Anna Dattas" (food providers) to "Urja Dattas" (energy providers), playing a crucial role in India's renewable energy ambitions, including net-zero emissions by 2070.
- 6. Biofuel Collaboration with Brazil:** India seeks cooperation with Brazil in biofuels, focusing on technology exchange, R&D, and investment in ethanol, biodiesel, biojet fuel, and green hydrogen.
- 7. Stable Sugar Prices and Positive Outlook:** Sugar prices remain stable, with a favourable production outlook for 2024-2025 due to a good monsoon.
- 8. Sustainable Packaging and Bharat Brand:** India is pushing for global promotion of the "Bharat Brand" and sustainable packaging to strengthen its position as a "Global Food Basket."

4. Taiwan Strait

Recently, a Japanese warship Sazanami destroyer sailed through the Taiwan Strait for the first time asserting its right to freedom of navigation.

About Taiwan Strait

Source: WorldAtlas

- 1. Location:** The Taiwan Strait is a narrow body of water located in East Asia, separating the island of Taiwan from mainland China.
- 2. It connects two major seas:** The East China Sea to the north and the South China Sea to the south, making it a strategically vital waterway.
- 3. Size:** The Taiwan Strait is about 180 kilometres (110 miles) wide at its narrowest point between Taiwan and the southeastern coast of mainland China.

The strait stretches approximately 355 kilometres (220 miles) from north to south.

4. Boundaries and Neighbouring Regions:

- a) **To the East:** Taiwan Island, which includes major cities like Taipei and Kaohsiung along its coast.

b) To the West: The southeastern coast of mainland China, particularly the Fujian Province. Major Chinese cities near the strait include Fuzhou and Xiamen.

c) To the North: The East China Sea is a marginal sea of the Pacific Ocean, lies to the north of the Taiwan Strait, forming part of the boundary with Japan.

d) To the South: The South China Sea is a heavily trafficked region for global shipping routes, connects with the Taiwan Strait to the south.

5. Oceanographic Characteristic: It is influenced by the Kuroshio Current, which flows northward along the east coast of Taiwan, contributing to the area's maritime climate and ocean dynamics.

6. Climate: The Taiwan Strait experiences a subtropical climate with seasonal monsoons affecting the region. Typhoons are common during the summer months, posing risks to maritime navigation.

7. Geopolitical Importance: The Taiwan Strait is crucial for global shipping, and conflict in this area could severely impact international trade, especially in industries like semiconductors where Taiwan is a key player.

8. Strategic Importance: Over 40% of global maritime trade passes through the region, making it a vital choke point. Also, Taiwan's role in the global semiconductor industry further underscores the region's stability as essential to the global economy.



5.T+0 Settlement

Stock exchanges have decided to delay the implementation of T+0 (same-day) settlement cycle for institutional clients, which was set to start on September 30, 2024, on a voluntary basis. T+0 was introduced for retail clients in 25 securities as a beta version in March 2024.

T+0 and T+1 Settlement Cycles:

- **T+0 Settlement:** Refers to same-day settlement of trades where both funds and securities are exchanged on the same day.
- **T+1 Settlement:** In this system, trades are settled one business day after the transaction date. It was introduced in 2021 and has already been implemented in phases.
- **Key Issue:** Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) are resisting T+0 due to the pre-funding requirements, and systems aren't fully ready for seamless adoption.

Significance on the Economy:

- **Faster Settlements:** Reduces the risks associated with delayed settlements and facilitates quicker access to funds and securities for investors.
- **Efficiency for Retail Investors:** T+0 can optimize fund utilization, particularly benefiting retail investors with limited capital.
- **Improved Accuracy:** T+1 has already led to reduced error rates in settlements, especially for FPIs, improving overall market efficiency.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Compare and contrast the ideological perspectives of Bhagat Singh and Mahatma Gandhi in the context of India's struggle for independence. Analyse their approaches towards non-violence, political activism and their visions for a free India.

Bhagat Singh and Mahatma Gandhi were two pivotal figures in India's struggle for independence, yet they represented contrasting ideological perspectives. While Gandhiji advocated non-violence (ahimsa) and passive resistance, Bhagat Singh believed in revolutionary methods, including the use of force when necessary. Their differing approaches reflect a broader spectrum of strategies employed in the fight against British colonialism, each contributing uniquely to the freedom movement.

Ideological Perspectives in the Context of Independence:

Ideological Perspectives	Gandhi's Approach	Bhagat Singh's Approach
Principle of Non-Violence	Gandhiji believed in non-violence (ahimsa) and truth as the means to achieve freedom. For example: The Champaran satyagraha	Bhagat Singh advocated for armed resistance and revolutionary activism to overthrow colonial rule.

	(1917) mobilised millions in non-violent resistance against British institutions.	For example: Bhagat Singh's participation in the Saunders murder case (1927) and the HSRA activities reflected his approach.
Role of Youth in the Struggle	Gandhiji believed that youth should engage in peaceful resistance and constructive programs to build the nation. For example: Gandhi encouraged young people to participate in movements like the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920) , urging them to boycott British institutions peacefully.	Bhagat Singh emphasized revolutionary methods , including the use of violence if necessary, to overthrow colonial rule. He believed youth should be ready to sacrifice their lives for immediate and radical action. For example: Bhagat Singh, along with his comrades, was involved in acts like the bombing of the Central Legislative Assembly (1929) to awaken the youth to the cause of revolution.
Mass Mobilization	Gandhi emphasized broad-based, inclusive mass movements, involving people from all walks of life— urban and rural, young and old . For example: Gandhiji's movements, like the Non-Cooperation and Quit India Movements , drew millions across India.	Bhagat Singh's approach was more focused on smaller, highly motivated groups of revolutionary youth , advocating for radical, direct actions and armed resistance. For example: Bhagat Singh's HSRA attracted passionate young revolutionaries, primarily targeting British officials and institutions through direct action.
Vision for a Free India	Gandhiji envisioned a free India based on non-violence, self-reliance, and moral governance . For example: Gandhi's vision of Ram Rajya emphasized non-violence, village self-sufficiency, and social harmony.	Bhagat Singh envisioned a socialist state post-independence, aiming for economic equality and the abolition of exploitation. For example: Bhagat Singh's activities with HSRA and his writings reflected his vision of dismantling colonial and economic oppression .
Economic Ideals	Gandhi promoted Swadeshi , urging Indians to boycott British goods and embrace local production to achieve economic independence . For example: His use of the charkha (spinning wheel) symbolized the need for self-reliance in rural areas.	Bhagat Singh believed in industrialization and modernization as necessary steps toward economic equality and the elimination of poverty. For example: His writings emphasized the need for industrial development to address post-colonial economic challenges.

Approaches Towards Non-Violence:

Gandhi:

- **Gandhi's Absolute Non-Violence:** Gandhi believed **non-violence** was not just a strategy but a **way of life**, advocating for peaceful resistance even in the face of brutality.
For example: Gandhi called off the **Non-Cooperation Movement** in **1922** after the **Chauri Chaura incident**, where violent clashes resulted in the deaths of British policemen.
- **Gandhi's Faith in Moral Courage:** Gandhi believed that **moral courage** and **truth** were more potent than physical violence in bringing about lasting change.
For example: His emphasis on truth and non-violence was evident in his guidance of movements like the **Quit India Movement (1942)**.
- **Gandhi's Emphasis on Satyagraha:** Gandhi's philosophy of **Satyagraha (truth force)** was based on the idea of **moral victory** over physical force, where non-violence was the highest form of courage.
For example: The **Salt March (1930)** exemplified Satyagraha, inspiring mass civil disobedience without any use of violence.

Bhagat Singh:

- **Bhagat Singh's Conditional Use of Force:** Bhagat Singh viewed **violence as a necessary tool** in certain situations to awaken the masses and challenge British rule.
For example: The **Central Assembly Bombing of 1929** was a symbolic act by Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt, meant to **"make the deaf hear"** without causing mass harm.
- **Bhagat Singh's Revolutionary Symbolism:** Bhagat Singh used violent acts symbolically to inspire **political consciousness**, arguing that violence should be directed at oppressive systems rather than people.
For example: His role in the **assassination of John Saunders** was aimed at striking a blow against oppressive British officials.
- **Bhagat Singh's Justification of Revolutionary Violence:** Bhagat Singh argued that violence was justified when used to **destroy oppressive systems** rather than to harm individuals.

Approaches Towards Political Activism:

Gandhi:

- **Gandhi's Civil Disobedience:** Gandhi led movements like civil disobedience and non-cooperation, encouraging masses to **boycott British goods, institutions, and laws**.
For example: The **Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-1934)** targeted unjust laws like the salt tax, uniting a wide base of Indians in non-violent protests.
- **Gandhi's Mass Political Engagement:** Gandhi's political activism centered on **mass movements** involving people from different walks of life, from peasants to the elite.
For example: His leadership during the **Champaran Satyagraha (1917)** brought attention to the plight of indigo farmers, directly involving them in the movement.
- **Gandhi's Emphasis on Self-Reliance:** Gandhi's activism promoted self-reliance through the **Swadeshi Movement**, urging Indians to reject British goods in favor of Indian-made products.
For example: Gandhi's advocacy of the **charkha (spinning wheel)** symbolized economic independence from British rule.

Bhagat Singh:

- **Bhagat Singh's Revolutionary Direct Action:** Bhagat Singh's political activism focused on direct action, including the use of force, to **immediately confront colonial oppression**.
For example: The **Lahore Conspiracy (1928)** highlighted his belief in revolutionary activism to strike at the core of colonial power.
- **Bhagat Singh's Targeted Activism:** Bhagat Singh aimed at inspiring a **core group of revolutionaries**, focusing on **younger activists** who believed in revolutionary socialism.
For example: His leadership in the **HSRA** involved youth in armed struggle.
- **Bhagat Singh's Intellectual Activism:** Bhagat Singh's activism was also **intellectual**, focusing on **revolutionary literature** and **philosophical debates** to inspire the youth.
For example: His writings like **"Why I am an Atheist"** were aimed at challenging orthodoxy and mobilizing intellectual resistance.

Visions for a Free India:

Gandhi:

- **Gandhi's Vision of Ram Rajya:** Gandhi's ideal for a free India was **Ram Rajya**, a state based on non-violence, equality, and rural self-sufficiency.
For instance : He envisioned an India where every village would be self-sufficient, promoting the ideals of **simple living** and **community welfare**.
- **Gandhi's Vision of Swaraj:** Gandhi envisioned **Swaraj (self-rule)** based on **moral upliftment**, where individuals would govern themselves, both politically and ethically.
For example: His concept of Swaraj emphasized moral responsibility, individual freedom, and economic independence through initiatives like the **Khadi Movement**.
- **Gandhi's Emphasis on Rural Development:** Gandhi believed in village-based development, focusing on agriculture, small-scale industries, and **minimal reliance on Western technology**.
For example: Gandhi's opposition to large-scale industrialization is evident in his promotion of **small-scale khadi industries**.
- **Gandhi's Focus on Religious Harmony:** Gandhi advocated for **religious harmony** and **unity** among Hindus and Muslims as the foundation for a free India.
For instance: He **opposed the partition of India**, believing that a free India should be based on religious unity.

Bhagat Singh:

- **Bhagat Singh's Vision of a Socialist Republic:** Bhagat Singh envisioned a **secular, socialist republic**, focusing on economic equality, the end of feudalism, and dismantling colonial capitalism.
For instance: Bhagat Singh's involvement in the **HSRA** was a step towards creating a socialist republic after independence.
- **Bhagat Singh's Industrial Vision:** Bhagat Singh, influenced by **Marxist ideologies**, saw the necessity of **industrial development** and **economic modernization** for post-colonial India.
For instance: His writings and speeches advocated for the industrialization of India to alleviate poverty and address inequalities.
- **Bhagat Singh's Focus on Secularism:** Bhagat Singh envisioned an India free from religious and caste divisions, advocating **secularism** and **social equality**.
For instance: His call for a secular and united India is reflected in his association with the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (**HSRA**), which sought to bridge religious divides.

Bhagat Singh and Mahatma Gandhi, despite their contrasting ideologies, played complementary roles in India's freedom struggle. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence and mass mobilisation drew global attention to the cause, while Bhagat

Singh's revolutionary spirit inspired a generation to fight against colonial oppression. Both leaders, in their unique ways, shaped the vision of a free India, leaving behind legacies that continue to influence the nation's political and social fabric.

MCQ

1. Which of the following statements are correct regarding the SCO Summit 2024?
 1. The summit saw the adoption of multiple key agreements, primarily focusing on energy and security.
 2. Belarus became a full member, bringing the total number of SCO members to 10.
 3. The SCO chairmanship was handed over to India for the 2024-2025 term.
 Select the correct answer code:
 - a) **1 and 2 only**
 - b) 1 and 3 only
 - c) 2 and 3 only
 - d) 1, 2, and 3

2. With reference to 'Vembanad Lake' consider the following statements:
 1. It is the longest lake in India and the largest lake in Kerala.
 2. It is the largest Ramsar site in India.
 Which of the statements given above are correct?
 - a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) **Neither 1 nor 2**

3. With reference to the "L.69 Group", consider the following statements:
 1. It is a group of developing countries from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific.
 2. They advocate for the reform of the United Nations Security Council.
 Which of the statements given above are incorrect?
 - a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) **Neither 1 nor 2**

4. Consider the following:
 1. Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE Network)
 2. Missile Technology Control Regime
 3. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
 India is a member of which of the above organisations?
 - a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 3 only
 - c) 2 and 3 only
 - d) **1, 2 and 3**

5. Consider the following statements regarding the Global Innovation Index (GII):
 1. It is an annual ranking that assesses the innovation performance of countries worldwide.
 2. The index is published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
 3. India has shown improvement in GII 2024 ranking.
 Which of the statements given above are correct?
 - a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) **1 and 3 only**
 - d) 1, 2 and 3

6. Which of the following countries borders the East China Sea?
 - a) **China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan**
 - b) Japan, South Korea, Philippines, Malaysia
 - c) China, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia
 - d) Taiwan, North Korea, Cambodia, Laos

7. Consider the following:
 1. Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
 2. Support for energy independence
 3. Increase in the energy content of fuel
 4. Requires minimal land and water resources for production
 How many of the above are the benefits of ethanol?
 - a) Only one
 - b) Only two
 - c) Only three
 - d) All four

8. What is the main objective of the Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PMJUGA)?
 - a) To provide affordable healthcare facilities to tribal areas.
 - b) To implement forest conservation practices in tribal regions.
 - c) **To ensure the saturation of basic schemes in Scheduled Tribe-majority villages.**
 - d) To promote higher education in tribal communities

9. Which of the following statements best describes the deployment plans for the Light Combat Helicopter (LCH)?
 - a) It will be deployed in the desert regions for anti-armor warfare.
 - b) It will be used for air defense missions in low-altitude regions.
 - c) It is primarily used for maritime operations.
 - d) **It will be deployed in high-altitude areas like Ladakh.**

10. With reference to Asia Power Index, consider the following statements:
 1. The index is published by Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
 2. In the 2024 edition of the Index, India has secured the position of the third most powerful nation in Asia.
 Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?
 - a) 1 only
 - b) **2 only**
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2