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GS 2: POLITY, GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/INSTITUTIONS

1. The U.S.'s WHO exit, a chance to reshape global health

Context: On his first day in office, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to withdraw the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO). This decision marks the second attempt by Trump to exit the global health body, citing dissatisfaction with WHO's management during the COVID-19 pandemic, perceived political biases, and disproportionate financial burdens placed on the U.S. Trump had initially announced a withdrawal during his first term in 2020. However, this was reversed by then-President Joe Biden in 2021.

Key points

- **Overview:** The new executive order revives the debate, calling into question the role of the U.S. in global health diplomacy and its commitment to multilateralism.

- **Reasons for the Withdrawal:** *Mishandling of the COVID-19 Pandemic* - Trump criticized WHO's delayed response to the pandemic and its handling of China's accountability in the initial stages of the outbreak.

Perceived Political Bias - The administration accused WHO of being overly influenced by certain member states, including China.

Financial Burden - The U.S. contributes the highest assessed membership dues, ranging between \$100 to \$122 million annually, and nearly \$1.3 billion in voluntary funding in 2022-2023.

Pandemic Treaty Exit - Discontinuation of negotiations on the WHO's pandemic treaty, a framework aimed at improving global pandemic responses.

- **Consequences of the withdrawal:** *Limited Access to Global Health Data* - The U.S. would lose access to critical information on emerging infectious diseases, potentially leaving the country vulnerable to new health threats.

Vaccine Preparedness - Exiting the WHO could impact access to influenza strain samples, essential for producing effective vaccines, leading to increased hospitalizations and deaths from preventable diseases like the flu.

Reduced Influence in Global Health Policy - By withdrawing, the U.S. would relinquish its leadership role, creating a vacuum likely to be filled by countries like China. This shift could reduce America's diplomatic leverage in international health.

- **Implication of this order:** *Financial Strain on WHO* - The U.S. contributes nearly 20% of WHO's funding. Losing this would severely impact the organization's ability to support health programs, including vaccine development, eradication of diseases like polio, and pandemic preparedness.

Program Disruptions in Developing Nations - WHO aids various global health programs, including India's immunization and disease surveillance efforts. Reduced funding could hinder these initiatives, particularly in low-resource countries.

Loss of Expertise - The withdrawal would sever collaboration between WHO and U.S. institutions like the CDC, which are instrumental in global health surveillance and response.

- **Geopolitical Shifts and the Role of Emerging Economies:** The U.S. withdrawal may pave the way for greater involvement from China and the Global South, including India. China has already pledged \$30 million in additional funding to WHO, a move likely to strengthen its influence in global health governance. Experts suggest this is an opportunity for India and other emerging economies to step up. India's leadership in vaccine production and its positioning as the "voice of the Global South" can play a pivotal role in shaping a balanced global health framework.

- **Challenges:** WHO faces significant internal criticisms, including slow responses to health crises and inefficiencies in implementing reforms. While funding cuts may exacerbate these issues, experts argue that constructive engagement rather than withdrawal is a better strategy to drive meaningful reform within the organization.

- **Way Forward:** *Judicial Clarity* - Legal experts question the constitutionality of Trump's decision, suggesting Congressional approval may be required for withdrawal.

Reforming WHO - WHO must address inefficiencies, improve transparency, and speed up emergency response protocols to regain trust and maintain global health leadership.

Strengthened Collaboration with Emerging Economies - Nations like India and South Africa should collaborate to fill the financial and strategic gap left by the U.S. withdrawal.

2. SC slams Assam govt for not deporting foreigners

Context: The Supreme Court criticised the Assam government for not deporting foreigners in detention centres and instructed the state to begin deportation within two weeks. The court highlighted that the right to life extends to all individuals and urged for immediate action to send them back to their countries. The top court directed the Assam government to initiate the deportation process of 63 declared foreign nationals, whose nationality was known and file a status report in two weeks.

Key points

- **Overview:** The implementation of NRC is expected to keep a check on illegal migrants; However, India already has several rules and regulations in place to control illegal migration in the country.
- **Foreigners Act, 1864:** It was the first enactment made for dealing with foreigners that provided for the expulsion of foreigners. It also allowed arrest, detention, and for a ban on foreigner's entry into India after detention.
- **The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920:** The act empowered the government to make rules requiring persons entering India to be in possession of passports. It also granted the government the power to remove from India any person who entered without a passport.
- **Amendments in the Foreigners Act:** *Foreigners Act, 1940* - It was enacted during the Second World War, under which the concept of "burden of proof" was introduced. This meant that whenever a question arose regarding the nationality of a person, the onus of proving that he was not a foreigner lay upon the person.
Foreigners Act, 1946 - It replaced the Foreigners Act, 1940 conferring wide powers to deal with all foreigners. The act empowered the government to take such steps as are necessary to prevent illegal migrants including the use of force.
- **Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983:** The absence of any provision related to the 'burden of proof' in the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 put a very heavy burden upon the authorities to establish whether a person is an illegal migrant. The Supreme Court, then, transferred all pending cases at the IMDT tribunals to the Foreigners Tribunals constituted under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964.
- **Existing Procedure for Appeal:** *Assam* - Currently, any person excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) can approach the Foreigners Tribunals, established only in Assam, within 120 days of receiving a certified copy of rejection.
Other states and Union Territories - In other States, a person suspected to be a foreigner is produced before a local court under the Passport Act, 1920, or the Foreigners Act, 1946.

GS 2: POLITY, GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/INSTITUTIONS

3. India-Indonesia ties as a beacon for global relations

Context: In strengthening their bonds, the two countries can lay the foundation for a more prosperous and sustainable future for Asia and the world. President Prabowo Subianto was the Chief Guest during the 76th Republic celebration in the country. The magnificence of the occasion was not only reflected in the vibrant displays of India's democracy, diversity and military strength, but was also a timely reminder of the deep and enduring relation between the countries, which can be a beacon for wider international relations.

Key points

- **Overview:** Both countries signed several MoUs covering areas such as health cooperation, digital infrastructure, and defence collaboration.
- **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership:** Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to elevating the bilateral relationship, which was upgraded to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2018.
- **Defence Cooperation:** The leaders committed to strengthening defence ties through initiatives like Coordinated Patrol, Ex Garuda Shakti (Army), and Ex Samudra Shakti (Naval).
- **Trade Cooperation:** Both nations aim to boost bilateral trade, which reached USD 38.8 billion in 2022-2023, and agreed to resolve trade barriers and expedite the AITIGA review.
- **Energy, and Health Security:** Both nations are focusing on biofuels and joint exploration of critical minerals like nickel and bauxite.
- **Technological Cooperation:** India offered to share its expertise in Digital Public Infrastructure, Quantum Communication, and High-Performance Computing with Indonesia.
- **Cultural Cooperation:** India aims to assist in restoring the Prambanan Temple in Indonesia and reaffirmed the "Kashi Cultural Pathway" principles from the G20 Culture Ministers' Meeting.
- **Multilateral Cooperation:** Both countries emphasized the importance of ASEAN centrality and cooperation on regional issues like the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific, India-Indonesia-Australia Trilateral and Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), BRICS and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
- **Conclusion:** Indonesia plays a vital role in India's regional strategy, with strong ties in trade, defence, and maritime security. Both countries aim to deepen collaboration through technological, cultural, and multilateral efforts, bolstering their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and reinforcing stability in the Indo-Pacific.

India-Indonesia Relations

- **Strategic Importance:** Indonesia occupies a pivotal position in the Indo-Pacific region, with control over key sea lanes such as the Strait of Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok, making it a critical partner in ensuring maritime security and the free flow of trade in the region.
- **Natural Resources:** Indonesia, rich in resources like palm oil, tin, rubber, cocoa, coffee, nickel, copper, timber, gold, and coal, is a key supplier for global markets and offers opportunities for India in energy, agriculture, and infrastructure.
- **Politics and Governance:** Indonesia, with the world's largest Muslim population, practices secularism through its unique Panchashila Constitution.
- **Global Influence:** Indonesia's leadership in ASEAN strengthens its cooperation with India, crucial for regional stability and mutual interests.

4. Learning with AI

Context: Schools must ensure that Human consciousness becomes integral to the connections between intelligence and learning. Only then will we be able to develop a shared understanding of citizenship, interdependence, and mutual interest. This will build cohesive societies, bring in social and economic institutions, and integrate universal values and processes, which can only be learnt in a school. AI has forced itself into the education agenda as never before, and the responses are still emergent and unclear.

Key points

- **Need for transformative education:** *Challenges in modern societies* – Existential issues such as climate change, inequality, and technological disruption require innovative solutions. Current education system may not be adequately preparing students to address these challenges.
Role of schools – Schools must go beyond traditional literacy and future readiness. They should focus nurturing equity, ecosystem understanding, and AI awareness to help students reach their highest potential.
- **Integrating Intelligence and Consciousness:** *Intelligence* – Defined as the ability to apply knowledge, solve problems, and adapt to new situations. Includes both biological intelligence and artificial intelligence (AI).
Consciousness – Involves metacognition, introspection, imagination, emotions and sensory perceptions. Essential for fostering shared understanding, citizenship and intelligence.
Combining Intelligence and Consciousness - Schools must integrate human consciousness into learning to build cohesive societies. This integration will help develop universal values, social and economic institutions and mutual interests.
- **Opportunities and challenges:** *AI's emergence in education* – AI has become a critical part of the education agenda, especially after the launch of tools like ChatGPT.
Challenges for educators – Teachers are hesitant due to concerns about AI hallucinations and the ethical implications of AI.
UNESCO's observations – Little work has been done to prepare teachers for AI integration. Teachers need support to personalize data, understand student learning patterns and identify engaging content.
- **BANI future:** *BANI framework* – *The future is described as Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear and Incomprehensible (BANI)*. Schools must engage in scenario planning to prepare for multiple plausible futures.
Decision-making for the future – Educators must equip themselves to make decisions that are robust and adaptable, regardless of which future unfolds.
- **Way forward:** *Refining vision and awareness* – Educators must continuously refine their vision to adapt to constantly changing reality.
Collaborative Intelligence – Emphasize the importance of collaborative intelligence in evolving education systems.
- **Conclusion:** The real hope for enduring change in schools lies with students. They are connected to the future in ways that no adult is. There is a need to evolve institutions and practices that assist, not replace, the natural learning process through collaborative intelligence.