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

1. The need for universal and equitable health coverage

Context: India has made significant progress in fighting Tuberculosis (TB) by adopting new methods for detection, treatment, and prevention. Key improvements include expanding molecular testing for faster TB and drug-resistance diagnosis, introducing the shorter all-oral BPaLM treatment (a mix of four medicines: Bedaquiline, Pretomanid, Linezolid, and Moxifloxacin), increasing nutrition support under the Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana to ₹1,000 per month, rolling out preventive TB therapy, and involving TB survivors and community champions. These efforts have led to a 17.7% drop in TB cases, from 237 per 1,00,000 people in 2015 to 195 per 1,00,000 in 2023, along with a 21.4% decline in TB-related deaths.

Key points

- **Overview:** Integrating TB services into the wider public health system is essential for India's goal of achieving equitable and universal health coverage.
- **Ayushman Bharat and TB Integration:** *Launch & Objective* - The Ayushman Bharat National Health Protection Scheme was launched in 2018 to ensure universal health coverage (UHC) for the Indian population.
  Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) – The world's largest insurance scheme.
  Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs) – Formerly known as Health and Wellness Centres, providing comprehensive primary healthcare in rural and urban areas.
- **Challenges in TB Care & Private Sector Involvement:** *Preference for Private Sector* - Despite free TB services in public healthcare, over 50% of TB patients seek care in the private sector.
  Concerns in Private Healthcare - Uneven care standards lead to delayed diagnosis and poor treatment outcomes.
  Solutions & Recommendations - Strengthening referrals from private to public healthcare for cost-effective treatment.
- **Strengthening Person-Centered Care at Scale:** *Decentralization & Care Accessibility* - While decentralizing TB care, we must ensure person-centered approaches are delivered at scale.
  Model Interventions - Several states have implemented initiatives linking socially and clinically vulnerable TB patients to care.
  Enhancing Public Health Utilization - Strengthening human resources, medical supplies, and infrastructure will drive UHC and improve TB care.
- **Ensuring Integrated TB & General Healthcare Services:** *Integration Challenge* - TB patients may also suffer from COPD, asthma, depression, or hypertension. Lack of comprehensive screening at community levels.
  Proposed Solutions - Implement general health screenings alongside TB testing. AI-enabled chest X-rays for TB & COPD, plus routine BP, glucose, and BMI checks.
- **Conclusion:** An equitable TB program ensures that every individual receives high-quality, person-centred care tailored to their specific needs. Equity is fundamental to healthcare and crucial for achieving TB elimination and universal health coverage. India's TB response is well-positioned to set global standards and benchmarks, and prioritizing equity will further accelerate progress.

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

2. Migration After Covid

Context: The pandemic caused severe disruptions to international migrants as well. Indian emigrants encountered severe hardships during the pandemic, including job losses, wage cuts, overcrowded living conditions, and heightened health risks due to inadequate sanitation and protective measures. Despite job losses and wage cuts, remittances to India remained resilient, sustaining households reliant on migrant earnings. The pandemic has reinforced the notion that remittances will remain a crucial driver of development in India & some of emigrant sending states.

Key points

- **Impact of the Pandemic on Migration:** *Immediate Effects* - Triggered reverse urban-to-rural migration around, 44.13 million migrants returned during the first lockdown (2020). 26.3 million during the second lockdown.
  Long-Term Shifts - Most migrants returned to urban areas post-pandemic, reverting to pre-COVID patterns. Rural economy failed to absorb returnees despite MGNREGA's temporary relief.
- **Drivers of Urban Migration:** *Push Factors* - Low wages, limited opportunities, and climate change impacts (e.g. Odisha's agriculture decline due to climate shifts). Urbanization goals (40% of India's population projected in cities by 2026).
  Policy Drivers - Smart Cities Mission relies on migrant labour for urban development.
- **Challenges in Rural Absorption:** MGNREGA provided only partial relief. Climate change exacerbates rural distress, accelerating out-migration.
- **Post-Pandemic Shifts:** *New Destinations* – Europe is showing a rise in highly skilled migrants (India top beneficiary of EU Blue Card in 2023; non-traditional destinations like Malta and Georgia). Africa is growing opportunities in IT, healthcare, and manufacturing (though risks persist, e.g. stranded workers in Cameroon).
  GCC Countries - Remain a key destination but face job losses and wage cuts.
- **Key Sectors Driving Migration:** *Student Migration* - Kerala's student emigrants doubled from 1.29 lakh (2018) to 2.5 lakh (2023). Risks highlighted by the Russia-Ukraine war crisis.
  Healthcare Workers - High global demand post-pandemic.
- **Migration Governance Challenges:** *Policy Gaps* - e-Shram Portal (2021) was aimed to create a database for unorganized workers but faced low registrations due to lack of awareness/digital access. One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) (2018) which improved food security for migrants but excluded many due to implementation barriers.
  Need for Reforms - Systematic evaluation of social security schemes. Expansion of migrant support networks beyond traditional destinations.
- **Way Forward:** *Policy Actions* - Strengthen rural economies to reduce distress-driven migration. Improve awareness and accessibility of welfare schemes (e.g. e-Shram, ONORC).
  Data Infrastructure - Expedite Census 2021 and adopt Kerala-style migration surveys nationally. Develop a comprehensive emigrant database.
  Global Engagement - Expand diplomatic and consular support for migrants in non-traditional destinations.

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3. India imposes anti-dumping duty on Chinese goods for up to 5 years

Context: India has imposed antidumping duty on five Chinese goods to protect domestic players from cheap imports from the neighbouring country. These duties were imposed as the products namely — Soft Ferrite Cores, a certain thickness of vacuum insulated flask, aluminium foil, Trichloro Isocyanuric Acid, and Poly Vinyl Chloride Paste Resin — were exported to India from China at below normal prices. The duties were imposed after recommendations for the same were made by the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR).

Key points

- **Anti-Dumping Duty:** It is a protectionist tariff that a domestic government imposes on imports that it believes are priced below fair market value. Dumping is a process wherein a company exports a product at a price that is significantly lower than the price it normally charges in its home (or its domestic) market.
- **Countervailing duty (CVD):** It is a specific form of duty that the government imposes to protect domestic producers by countering the negative impact of import subsidies. CVD is thus an import tax by the importing country on imported products.
- **WTO's Provisions Related to Anti-Dumping Duty:** *Validity* - An anti-dumping duty is valid for a period of five years from the date of imposition unless revoked earlier.
  Sunset Review - It can be extended for a further period of five years through a sunset or expiry review investigation.
- **Directorate General of Trade Remedies:** It is the apex national authority under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for administering all trade remedial measures including anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguard measures.

Q. How many of the following statements is/are correct about Anti-Dumping Duty?

1. Anti-dumping duties on imports are imposed to offset the subsidies provided to the goods by the exporting country.

2. Director General of Trade Remedies imposes the Anti-dumping duty.

3. Anti-dumping duties are prohibited under WTO rules.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

a) Only one

b) Only two

c) All three

d) None

GS 3: ECONOMY, ECOLOGY, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, DEFENCE, SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

4. The green path to growth

Context: India's GDP growth slowed down, raising concerns about its long-term economic and sustainability goals, highlighting the need to balance fast growth with green growth. India, known as the world's, fastest-growing large economy, has witnessed a decline in its GDP growth rate over the last year. This slowdown not only affects the immediate economic outlook but also pushes back the long-term goal of achieving "Viksit Bharat"— transforming India into a developed nation by 2047. To stay on track, India needs to sustain an annual GDP growth rate of over 8 per cent.

Key points

- **Overview:** India has committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2070, a goal that requires substantial progress in the near term. By 2030, the country aims to reduce emissions intensity by 50 per cent, develop 500 GW of renewable energy capacity, and secure nearly $290 billion in investments for solar and wind energy.
- **Green Growth and Economic Growth:** Green growth and fast economic growth seem to conflict, as India's current economic expansion heavily relies on carbon-intensive industries. The recent economic slowdown can be partly attributed to declining growth in emissions-intensive manufacturing.
  Coal generation - With coal generating 55-60 per cent of India's power and demand projected to peak only around 2030-2035, shifting to greener alternatives poses challenges.
- **Green Growth as an Economic Opportunity:** Rather than hindering economic progress, green growth can serve as a catalyst for job creation and innovation. The World Economic Forum's Mission 2070 report estimates that India could generate 50 million new jobs through green initiatives by 2070, contributing $1 trillion in additional economic value by 2030 and up to $15 trillion by 2070.
- **Strategy for Fast and Green Growth:** The 2025 Union Budget reflects India's commitment to both economic and environmental goals, with major green initiatives such as the development of 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047 and support for solar equipment manufacturing. However, a more comprehensive strategy is required across three key dimensions -
  - *Strengthening Renewable Infrastructure* – India must invest in renewable energy capacity while ensuring supporting infrastructure, such as energy storage, grid transmission, carbon capture, and public-private partnerships, is in place.
  - *Addressing Demand-Side Challenges* – Farmers and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which form a significant portion of the workforce and economy, need access to affordable, sustainable technologies, financing, and infrastructure. Tools like carbon pricing and green finance schemes can aid in this transition.
  - *Managing Economic Disruptions* – Shifting to green growth may cause short-term disruptions in certain industries. Sectors reliant on coal need assistance in reskilling workers and restructuring economies, potentially through subsidies funded by industries benefiting from green transitions.
- **Conclusion:** A well-planned transition to a low-carbon economy can create jobs, enhance energy security, and strengthen India's global position. A sustainable and resilient economy is not just desirable but necessary for India's long-term prosperity.

GS 3: ECONOMY, ECOLOGY, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, DEFENCE, SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

5. India set to become world's consumption capital

Context: India is on track to become the global consumption capital, outpacing major economies, according to a new report. The consumption in India accounts for 56 per cent of the country's GDP and is growing at the fastest rate in the world. A report by Angel One and Iconic Asset showed that over the next decade, India's consumption is projected to double by 2034. An economy's growth is like navigating two interconnected boats—one representing the supply or production of goods and services.

Key points

- **Role of consumption:** Consumption plays a crucial role in driving economic growth, but it is not sufficient on its own for sustainable long-term growth –
  - *Consumption-Led Growth is Slower* - While consumption boosts demand, it does not create long-term productive capacity. Example: India's GDP growth in recent years has been driven by consumption (60.3% of GDP in 2023), but it lags China's investment-driven growth.
  - *Limited Multiplier Effect* - Unlike investment, increased consumption has a weaker impact on overall income and job creation. Example: If people buy more smartphones, it benefits retailers but does not significantly boost domestic production if phones are imported.
  - *Investment is Crucial for Sustainable Growth* - Higher investment in infrastructure, industries, and technology leads to job creation and productivity gains. Example: China's high investment rate (41.3% of GDP in 2023) has helped it achieve rapid economic growth and higher per capita income than India.
- **Factors for economic growth:** *Balanced Growth Requires Both Supply & Demand* - Economic growth happens when goods and services are produced (supply) and purchased (demand) in a balanced manner.

  Investment Drives Long-Term Growth - Investment in infrastructure, industries, and technology increases production capacity (supply) while also creating jobs, which boosts spending power (demand).
- **Initiatives by the government:** *Infrastructure Development* - The government has launched massive infrastructure projects to boost investment and improve connectivity. Example: PM Gati Shakti (National Master Plan) aims to integrate multi-modal transport networks and reduce logistics costs.

  Corporate Tax Reforms - India reduced corporate tax rates to make the investment climate more competitive. Example: In 2019, the corporate tax rate was slashed to 22% for existing companies and 15% for new manufacturing firms.
- **Way forward:** *Enhancing Investment-Led Growth* - India should focus on increasing capital formation by boosting infrastructure, industrial productivity, and R&D investments. Strengthening public-private partnerships (PPPs) and expanding the PLI scheme to emerging sectors can accelerate long-term economic growth.

  Balancing Consumption and Supply-Side Expansion - While consumption remains a key driver, policies should encourage domestic manufacturing and export competitiveness to reduce reliance on imports. Strengthening skill development and labour market reforms will enhance productivity and job creation.