GS III

SYLLABUS: INDIAN ECONOMY AND ISSUES RELATING TO GROWTH.

MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 17.

News: *"A wake-up call."*

Context: *Expectations of 7%-plus growth in 2024-25, which followed a robust 8.2% GDP increase last year, appear uncertain or overly optimistic. The first half's growth was only 6%, while the Monetary Policy Committee forecasted a 7% growth rate for Q2 in its October review and projected a 6.8% growth rate, but actual growth was 5.4%.*

About Monetary Policy Committee:
- **Type:** *Statutory body* under *RBI Act 1934.* (Established in 2016).
- *Urjit Patel committee* recommended the formation of MPC.
- **Constituted by:** *Central Govt.* where 3 members from RBI and 3 nominated by government (nominee must not be a government official).
- **Responsibilities & Functions of MPC:**
  - Entrusted with the responsibility of *deciding the different policy rates*, including MSF, Repo Rate (RR), Reverse Repo Rate (RRR), LAF etc.
  - To *ensure price stability* with sustainable growth.
  - Inflation targeting *@ 4% with 2% buffer.*
  - Required to *meet at least four times in a year.*
  - **Decisions are taken by majority,** Governor has a casting vote incase of tie.
  - RBI **must publish half-early MPC report** explaining sources of inflation, forecast of 18 months ahead.
  - Incase of failure, it should *submit report to Central Govt.*
- **Instruments of MPC:**
  - LAF, MSF, MSS, OMO (RR & RRR), CRR, SLR, Bank Rate.
- **Failure of MPC:** when average inflation is higher or lower than the desired limit for 3 consecutive quarters.

Challenges to Inflation Targeting:
- **Food inflation challenges:**
  - Monsoon dependent agriculture.
  - Lack of cold storage facilities for perishable goods.
  - Rising input costs.
- **Policy related Challenges:**
  - **Ineffective monetary policy transmission** shows implementation challenges in Banking system.
  - **Fiscal policy:** fiscal deficit remained above FRBM norms since 4 years, adding to increased inflation.
  - **GST Moderations:** high GST rates on some items.
  - **Unemployment issues all year around.**
- **Global Challenges:**
  - Wars and Pandemics.
  - Disruption of Supply chains.
  - Foreign central bank Policies.
  - Climate change Eg. El Niño phenomenon, droughts.

Suggestions:
- **For Food Inflation:**
  - Creation of Buffer stocks for essential food items.
  - Banning exports and imposing stock limits.
- **For Core inflation:**
  - **Higher R&D allocation:** Climate smart agri- reduces Supply shocks.

P.T.O

- **Rationalising Fertiliser subsidies:** ₹5T in 2022-23, needs to be reduced.

- **Policy measures:**
  - **Coordinated monetary and fiscal policy:** To tackle global disruptions Eg: Oilseeds, Cereals.
  - **Check to freebies:** instead promote rural investments, rural infrastructure, competitiveness in agriculture.
  - **Spending on Infrastructure:** increases multiplier effect Eg: During Covid India showed World how to manage inflation while protecting GDP growth.
  - **Different inflation targets:** Benefits for different classes Eg: Food-3-4%.
  - **Improving Data quality and frequency:** AI based Data processing.

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PYQs: CSE (M).

GS III 2022: Besides the welfare schemes, India needs deft management of inflation and unemployment to serve the poor and the underprivileged sections of society. Discuss.

E-GOVERNANCE

PRE-CONTEXT

PRAGATI PLATFORM

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 12.

News: *"Oxford study lauds PRAGATI system for fast-tracking projects."*

- **About PRAGATI Platform:**
- **Pr**o-**A**ctive **G**overnance **A**nd **T**imely **I**mplementation.
- PRAGATI *infrastructure monitoring system* for accelerating 340 projects worth $205 billion across the country and bringing about economic transformation.
- Designed by the *Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the National Informatics Centre (NIC)* as part of *Digital India program.*

- **PRAGATI Platform impacts:**
  - **Multiplier effects:** *For every rupee spent* on infrastructure, India sees a *gain of ₹2.5 to ₹3.5* in GDP —RBI studies.
  - **Commitment to overcoming Bureaucratic Hurdles:** facilitated faster environmental clearances, land acquisition process, inter ministerial coordination.
  - Promoted the use of **green technologies.**
  - **Timely Implementation** of projects.
  - **Fostering a Team India mindset** and culture of accountability and efficiency.

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GS III

Syllabus: basics of cyber security.

CYBERSECURITY

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 6.

News: "New crimes, old tools."

"Cyber-attacks can bring a nation to its knees."

"₹3,000 crore was lost because of ~6,00,000 cases of cyber fraud between FY2020 and FY2024"–response to RTI by RBI 2024.

Context: As the government pushes for universal banking and greater access to digital services, it is critical that these advances do not become vulnerabilities for ordinary people.

Cybercrime methods (most common):
- *Social Engineering Attacks: Manipulating* people into revealing confidential information.
- *Ransomware Attacks*: *Malicious software* that locks data until a ransom is paid. 53% increase in the ransomeware incidents in 2022—**CERT-In report.**
- *Phishing*: Tricking individuals into revealing sensitive information *via fake emails or messages.* 150 million phishing emails sent globally every day.
- *Identity Theft: stealing personal information* to impersonate someone for financial gain.
- *Cyberstalking and Harassment: Using the internet to stalk*, harass, or bully individuals.
- *Denial of Service: Blocking access to websites.*
- *Cyber Espionage:* using *stealthy IT malware to spy* on both corporate & military data.
- *Digital arrest scam:* fraudsters target individuals or businesses, posing as law enforcement or government officials, victims are *threatened with a digital arrest warrant.*

Challenges with Cybercrime:
- *Innumerable entry points to internet* Eg. As an open source, Android is highly susceptible to risk.
- **Lower levels of** *digital literacy* **among users of internet:** Eg. Clicking exploitative links, spam calls etc.
- **Few domestic companies:** in Cyber security domain.
- *Outsource the cybersecurity services:* due to lack of skilled cyber security professionals eg. virtual CISOs.
- *Lack of Robust Implementation:* Eg. National Cyber security policy 2013 have serious implementation issues.
- **Digital Data Threat:** Data is considered a New age Oil, Eg. Data leaks on Dark net.
- *Dark Net:* 90% of total internet but expertise in this Ecosystem is questionable.
- **Technologies used for attack are advanced** to defense technology which are currently in use.

Cyber-Security Laws in India:
- **Police and Public Order are State Subjects** - *7th Schedule of Constitution.*
- **IT-Act 2000:** primary law to deal with Cybersecurity and Digital Commerce.

P.T.O

- *Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023:* introduces stringent data protection measures for public and private entities.

Notable cyber attacks:
- *Cryptowall 2014-16:* extorted 18million USD from victims.
- *WannaCry 2017:* hit 2 lakh+ systems.
- *Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant* Malware infection.
- *2020 Mumbai grid failure*: in Mumbai by the Chinese malware **"ShadowPad"**- New York Times.

Measures in Place:
- National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (*NCIIPC*).
- **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (***I4C***):** for comprehensive management of Cyber issues.
- *www.cybercrime.gov.in:* portal to enable complainants to report Eg. Child Pornography/Child Sexual Abuse Material.
- *Mandatory reports* **by Digital services providers:** on cyber security incidents to CERT-In expeditiously.
- *Cyber Swachhta Kendra*: to detect malicious programmes and free tools to remove such programmes.
- **Crisis Management Plans:** to counter cyber-attacks and cyber terrorism.
- **Mock drills and exercises:** for regular assessment and preparedness.
- **Digital India Platform:** for awareness.

Strengthening measures:
- **P-P-P model for cybersecurity** govt. shall partner with private sector to strengthen cybersecurity posture.
- **Information security Policies and practices:** Eg. Websites to adhere to international standards.
- **Establishment of State Computer Emergency Response Team(SCERT):** in conjunction with CERT in coordination with NCIIPC.
- **Assurance framework:** Eg. Security certification framework, Qualification criteria, Security audits etc.
- **Appropriation of Security Budget:** helps govt. agencies to maintain compliance with IT Act 2000.
- **Capacity Building and Awareness:**
  - **Citizens and small businesses**: Develop a little healthy scepticism could prevent many people from falling prey to scams.
  - **For large Businesses:** mock drills and information sharing etc.
  - **Students:** introducing cybersecurity academic curriculum, Extending International Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) program etc.

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PYQs: CSE (M).

GS III 2022: What are the different elements of cyber security? Keeping in view the challenges in cyber security, examine the extent to which India has successfully developed a comprehensive National Cyber Security Strategy.

GS III 2020: Discuss different types of cybercrimes and measures required to be taken to fight the Menace.

GS III 2017: Discuss the potential threats of Cyber attack and the security framework to prevent it.

GS II & ESSAY

SYLLABUS: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT.

ONE NATION ONE SUBSCRIPTION

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "India's 'One Nation, One Subscription' plan"

Context: India, with its immense pool of talent and resources, has the potential to reimagine this publishing ecosystem, fostering innovation in the workflow. establishing India as a leader in science and innovation.

About One Nation One Subscription (ONOS):
- ONOS promises to **provide equitable access to scholarly journals** *in all public institutions.*
- **Delivers scientific knowledge, as a** *publicgood* making ideally accessible to all.
- **To combat misinformation** and drive informed decision-making.

Differences:
- **Funding:**
  - **Commercial Publishing (CP):** Publishers generate revenue through direct sales of publications or subscriptions from individual buyers or institutions.
  - **ONOS:** *Govt. funds the scheme* through a centralised budget allocation.
- **Access:**
  - **CP:** Access to publications is based on individual or institutional subscriptions.
  - **ONOS:** promises to provide equitable access to scholarly journals in all public institutions.
- **Pricing:**
  - **CP:** Prices for publications and subscriptions are determined by market forces and publisher's costs.
  - **ONOS:** *A single, negotiated price* is set for all participating institutions.

Challenges with Commercial Publishing:
- **Challenges of Commercial Publishing:** Excessive subscription fees, inefficiencies, and resistance to innovation.
- **Publishers charging high fees** for access to work already supported by public institutions.
- **Only a few disciplines have fully transitioned to Open Access:** *Eg. Such as biological science*.
- **To tackle risks of reliance on western publishers** *Eg. lessons from COVID 19.*
- **Copyright Concerns:** Researchers lose control over their work as publishers hold the copyright *Eg.Taylor & Francis (T&F) and Microsoft controversy* over AI training.

Issues with ONOS:
- **Open Access Publishing Trend:** with over 53% of scientific papers being available for open access.
- **Subscription model raises questions:** about financial prudence, especially with free research articles available.
- **U.S. and EU mandates for publicly funded research to be freely accessible** by 2026 and 2027, respectively, further complicate the subscription model's viability.
- **By 2025, a substantial portion of research will be freely accessible online**, raising questions about ONOS's relevance beyond 2025.

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POLITY

PRE-CONTEXT

PARLIAMENTARY DEVICES & CONCEPTS

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 11.

News: "Opposition stalls both Houses over Adani row and Sambhal violence."

Question Hour
- *1st Hour* of parliamentary sitting.
- *MPs* ask questions and *ministers* give answers.
- Question hour mentioned in *Rules of Procedure of both houses*.
- **Three types of questions raised during Question Hour:**
  - *Starred Question:* Require oral answer and Supplementary question can be asked.
  - *Unstarred Question:* Require written answer and Supplementary question cannot be asked.
  - *Short Notice Question:* answered orally and asked short notice of less than 10 days.
- *Indian Council Act 1892* introduced question hour under colonial rule.

Zero Hour:
- *Informal device* to raise matters *without any prior notice.*
- It **starts immediately after the question hour** and lasts until the agenda for the day.
- It is an *Indian innovation* (since 1962)
- *Not mentioned* in the Rules of Procedure.

Adjournment:
- **Adjournment of House:**
  - **Temporary Adjournment:** *Suspending the proceedings* of the entire house for a specified period or until the next scheduled sitting.
  - **Adjournment Sine Die:** An indefinite adjournment without setting a date to resume. It usually *marks the end of a parliamentary session*, Eg. the President of India prorogues the Parliament, effectively adjourning both houses sine die until the next session.
- **Adjournment of Sitting:**
  - Suspending a *particular day's proceedings*, either for a few minutes or hours, often to address unforeseen circumstances or sudden interruptions.
- **Motion of Adjournment (Adjournment Motion):**
  - Strategic tool primarily utilized by opposition members *to draw attention to matters of urgent public importance* and compel the govt to address them.
  - *Rajya Sabha is not permitted to use this motion*, involving an **element of censure against the govt.**
  - **Procedure:** *support of minimum 50 members* needed to support adjournment motion.

Note: **Censure against the government:** Unlike, *motion of No-confidence*, which can lead to the government's resignation or dissolution, *censure motions* are primarily **symbolic formal disapproval or criticism** towards govt. actions.

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GS II

SYLLABUS: PROTECTION AND BETTERMENT OF VULNERABLE SECTIONS.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 6 & 7.

News: "Citizens with disabilities, making their rights real".
News: "Frontline nutrition workers foster disability inclusion."
News: "Enabling a level playing field."
News: "Breaking barriers with the help of tech".

Status of Disabilities:
- According to *2011 national Census* of India indicate that persons with disabilities constitute *2.2% of the total population.*
- **India ratified the** *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007* & Parliament passed the *Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016* RPWD Act replaced earlier Act.

Protection of Disabled people:
- RPWD Act provision for the constitution of the *office of the State Commissioners* for Disabilities at the State level.
  - **Powers:**
    - **Implementation** of the disability law.
    - Commissioners, shall have the *same powers of a civil court* under the Civil Procedure Code 1908.
    - *Powers of suo motu* to identify and inquire about any specific policy affecting PwDs.
    - While trying a suit, and every proceeding before the State Commissioner *shall be a judicial proceeding.*

Problems faced by Persons with Disabilities (in general):
- **Governance Challenges:**
  - **Lax attitude on the part of the State govts** to appoint State Commissioners.
  - **State Commissioners have been unable to intervene suo motu** to address discriminatory policies and practices, eroding faith in statutory offices.
  - **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules:** Eg. Prescribing accessibility standards *were not even mandatory by nature*.
  - **Lack of implementation of rights of persons** with disabilities under Disabilities Act 2016. Leaving them not included.
- **Emotional and relational challenges:**
  - Particularly regarding access to love, desire, and intimacy.
  - Right to leisure compromised
  - *Society did not even bother* to enquire into the "right to relationships" of persons with disabilities.
  - This *exacerbates the feeling of Exclusion.*
  - Privacy of PwDs is often overlooked.
- **Social Challenges:**
  - *Face social stigma & Struggle for dignity.* Eg. Considering them as pitiful or helpless, incase belonging to lower caste it doubles or triples the burden.
  - *Marginalisation in all sectors.* Eg. Viewed as incapable of community participation.
- **Opportunity Challenges:**
  - *Discrimination in education and employment.* Eg. Nifty 50 report 2023 highlights, out of 50 companies only 5 companies have more than 1% of PWDs employed of them 4 are public sector companies.
- **Accessibility Infrastructure challenges:**
  - *Educational institutions lack the necessary infrastructure.* Eg. Less than 1% institutions are disabled friendly, like no Ramps.

- Low floor wheelchair-accessible CNG buses for public transport. Eg. *Many cities lack such buses*.
- Restrooms for persons with disabilities.
- Highlights the *lack of compassion and human dignity.*
- *Support mechanisms and workplaces concern.*

Measures for inclusion of Disabled:
Best practices:
- **Karnataka Mobile Adalats:** Reaching out to people with disabilities in *remote areas* and investigating their rights deprivation.
- **Mission Vatsalya & ICDS:** special provisions for children with disabilities in *Child Care Institutions (CCIs).*
- **Shiv Nader University:** Disability support policy *supporting students case by case basis* based on severity of disability.
- **Brazil model, Fines and penalties:** companies with more than 100 employees *must comprise 2%-5% of total workforce.*
- **Japan model, System of subsidiaries for employees:** i.e *creation of suitable working condition's* for disabled.
- **Enabling Right to leisure measures:** have *subtitles and audio descriptions* on OTT platforms, *sign language interpreter* etc.
- **Showcasing inclusive stories in popular entertainment.** Eg. Films such as *Margarita with a Straw (2014) and Srikanth (2024).*
- Such above measures *need to be institutionalised.*

Case study:
This year, *India's Paralympians made history at the 2024 Summer Paralympic Games* by bringing home *29 medals. Sheetal Devi* with her impeccable precision in **archery**, *Sumit Antil* with his extraordinary **javelin throws**, others.

Their journey underscores the ***Ethical principles*** like:
- **Determination of** *Will* despite physical and societal barriers.
- *Dedication* towards training to achieve excellence.
- *Resilience* to overcome setbacks.

Quote:
- "My friend says disabled people can be negative, I (disabled person) agree, we are *so negative sometimes the able-bodied mind never reaches us. That distance is too far..* it is thus those who are creating the distance (who) should bridge the gap"—***Book Grammar of My Body.***

- "Disability is not inherent in the person, but is created by external factors such as physical, organisational, and attitudinal barriers"—**Supreme Court of India 2024.**

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PYQs: CSE (M).
GS IV 2017: Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss.
GS IV 2022: The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 remains only a legal document without intense sensitisation of government functionaries and citizens regarding disability. Comment.

Thank you!