



P.L.RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

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1. From borderland to India's strategic resource frontier (TH)

GS Paper II & III - Polity and Governance / Internal Security / Economic Development & Mineral Resources

Topic - Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections; Decentralization of powers and local institutions; Security challenges and their management in border areas; Distribution of key natural resources.

Sub-Topic - Critical Mineral Security, The "Frontier" Narrative Shift, Sixth Schedule & Customary Land Rights, Centre-State Relations, and Resource Governance in Conflict-Prone Zones.

1. Introduction

1. Official platforms of the Ministry of Mines have recently re-contextualized several north-eastern states within a unified strategic frame, portraying them as repositories of critical minerals and untapped economic potential.
2. Official releases described Manipur as a "quiet mineral frontier", Arunachal Pradesh as a "resource-rich frontier", and framed Meghalaya and Mizoram through similar narratives highlighting hidden wealth beneath their hills.
3. While governments routinely publicize natural resources to attract development, this coordinated terminology signals a major shift in the language through which the northeast is framed in the national conversation and strategic picture.

2. The Critical Mineral Push - Drivers and Exploration Scale

1. **Strategic Re-alignment** - Critical minerals have transitioned from purely geological discussions into high-stakes strategic ones, driven by global industrial competition, advanced technological manufacturing, and clean energy transitions.
2. **Industrial Dependence** - Modern technologies—including electric vehicle batteries, semiconductors, renewable energy setups, and defence hardware—depend heavily on these minerals.
3. **The Import Vulnerability** - India remains highly dependent on foreign imports for several critical minerals, prompting an aggressive expansion of domestic exploration.
4. **Exploration Footprint** - According to a Ministry of Mines parliamentary reply, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) executed **43 critical mineral exploration projects** across north-eastern states during the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 field seasons.

5. **Mineral Profile** – These 43 exploration projects targeted vital resources, including graphite, vanadium, lithium, rare earth elements (REEs), nickel, and cobalt.
6. **Geographic Spread** – Active exploration has expanded across Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur, with new projects focusing on nickel, cobalt, and chromium recently launched in Manipur.

3. Deconstructing the "Frontier" Narrative Shift

1. **The Historical Baseline** – For decades, national strategy viewed the northeast primarily through the language of borders and security. Policy discussions focused on containing insurgencies, territorial management, border connectivity, and neighbouring geopolitical challenges.
2. **Security-Led Infrastructure** – Historically, infrastructure and economic development in the region were justified mainly as tools to secure strategic access and maintain territorial security.
3. **The Convergence** – Today, the language of natural resources is entering a strategic space once dominated by border concerns. Critical minerals are discussed alongside trade corridors, causing territorial security and resource security to converge. Regions once managed strictly as sensitive border zones are now valued as strategic assets.
4. **The Meaning of "Frontier"** – The repeated description of these states as "frontiers" reflects how the state imagines the geography. Historically, states view frontiers as empty spaces awaiting integration, development, or extraction because they appear as landscapes of future possibility.

4. Socio-Political Fault Lines and Land Dynamics

1. **Existing Social Realities** – Frontiers are rarely empty spaces waiting to be discovered. The hills and valleys of the northeast contain dense social and political worlds organized around customary land systems, local institutions, and long-standing community relationships with the territory.
2. **Beyond Economics** – Questions of land ownership in the region extend past economics; they are deeply tied to political authority, cultural identity, and collective memory.
3. **The Manipur Conflict Vector** – Resource extraction enters landscapes with complex histories, which becomes challenging in areas where political uncertainties shape daily life. In Manipur, recent violence and large-scale displacement have intensified local debates over land ownership and territorial arrangements.
4. **The Lens of Trust** – Across the wider northeast, concerns regarding resource ownership, ecological vulnerability, and local participation surface frequently. Resource projects acquire meanings beyond economic development, as local communities interpret them through the lens of trust, institutional representation, and political inclusion.

5. Resolving the Mismatch – Resource Development vs. Inclusion

1. **The Dual Mandate** – India's push for critical resources is a practical step given global supply-chain uncertainty and geopolitical competition. Simultaneously, the northeast requires infrastructure, sustainable employment, and economic opportunities to fix decades of uneven growth.
2. **The Speed Mismatch** – Historically, national priorities and local realities in the northeast have moved at different speeds. Major connectivity projects have sometimes arrived without the corresponding local economic ecosystems needed to support them.
3. **Overshadowing Participation** – Strategic and security considerations have frequently overshadowed local participation and institutional representation.
4. **The Risk of Extraction** – Resource development risks creating similar local tensions if mineral extraction moves faster than the institutional mechanisms capable of managing its social and environmental consequences.

5. **The Central Question** – The region has transitioned in the national imagination from a border to be secured, to a corridor to be connected, and now to a landscape of strategic resources. The central challenge is whether this new resource push will actively include the local populations or merely assign another extractive purpose to the land beneath their feet.

Source – <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/from-borderland-to-indias-strategic-resource-frontier/article71073790.ece>

Question

"The strategic re-framing of India's north-eastern region from a 'security border' to a 'critical mineral frontier' brings commercial opportunities but risks worsening historical center-periphery tensions. Elaborate on this statement and suggest a governance framework to ensure inclusive resource extraction in the region." (250 Words, 15 Marks)

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Mines' recent framing of north-eastern states as a "mineral frontier"—supported by **43 active GSI exploration projects** for lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements—marks a major shift in India's national strategy. This transition moves the region past a traditional focus on border management toward active resource security. However, introducing large-scale extraction into areas with distinct customary land systems requires balancing national economic goals with local rights.

2. The Strategic Shift and Associated Risks

Shifting the strategic focus from border security to resource extraction introduces several complex governance challenges –

1. **The Risk of Inverting the Frontier Narrative** – Portraying the northeast as a resource frontier can cause policymakers to view it as an empty space awaiting extraction. In reality, these landscapes are governed by customary land systems and local institutions where land is tied directly to identity, authority, and memory.
2. **Worsening Existing Multi-Layered Tensions** – Implementing top-down resource projects can create local distrust, especially in areas facing political uncertainty. For instance, in conflict-affected areas like Manipur, unmanaged land acquisition for mineral projects can worsen existing ethnic and territorial disputes.
3. **The Institutional Speed Mismatch** – Historically, strategic initiatives in the northeast have moved faster than the local economic ecosystems needed to sustain them. If mineral extraction bypasses local representative institutions, it risks creating environmental damage and economic alienation, repeating historical center-periphery frictions.

3. Proposed Inclusive Governance Framework

To ensure resource development leads to local inclusion rather than alienation, the state should implement a sustainable, collaborative framework –

1. **Upholding Constitutional Safeguards** – Resource exploration must respect the autonomous structures set up under the **Sixth Schedule** of the Constitution and Article 371 (such as 371A for Nagaland and 371G for Mizoram), ensuring local councils have a say in project approvals.
2. **Mandating Community Consent and Veto Power** – Moving beyond simple administrative consultation to require the explicit consent of traditional village institutions and local bodies before launching extraction projects, helping build institutional trust.
3. **Instituting Local Revenue-Sharing Models** – Setting up a dedicated regional mineral fund—similar to the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) but tailored to tribal land systems—to ensure a clear portion of mining revenues directly funds local education, healthcare, and ecological conservation.

Conclusion

India's search for critical minerals is necessary to reduce its import dependence and support its green energy transition. However, long-term resource security cannot be achieved without local cooperation. By moving away from purely extractive models and adopting a cooperative framework that respects customary land rights and shares economic returns, India can transform its north-eastern frontier into a partner for national development and shared prosperity.

Source - <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/from-borderland-to-indias-strategic-resource-frontier/article71073790.ece>

2. Amid Rising Frequency of Global Shocks, A Moment to Activate Growth Drivers Within Domestic Control (IE)

GS Paper III - Indian Economy and Issues Relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development, and Employment.

Topic - Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment; Government Budgeting; Major crops/cropping patterns in various parts of the country.

Sub-Topic - Growth-Inflation Mix, National Statistical Office (NSO) GDP Estimates, Imported Inflation & Price Transmission, Crisis Financial Conditions Index, and Medium-Term Domestic Growth Drivers.

1. Introduction

India's growth-inflation mix is experiencing increasing pressure for the current fiscal year. This shifting dynamic is driven primarily by external geopolitical developments—specifically the unresolved West Asia conflict—alongside internal domestic vulnerabilities, including expectations of a sub-par monsoon season. Because these core factors fall completely outside the direct control of domestic policymakers, the risk to economic growth continues to rise as upside pressures on inflation become more acute.

Faced with an increasingly complex external environment, the analysis notes that the historical "good luck" factors that previously kept inflation stable while supporting expansion have turned adverse, requiring a strategic shift toward activating internal growth drivers.

2. Retrospective Performance - The 2025–2026 Economic Baseline

The document establishes the baseline performance of the preceding fiscal year to contrast it with current economic pressures -

1. **Growth Resilience** - Despite significant global trade turbulence throughout 2025 and the outbreak of the West Asia conflict toward the end of February 2026, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth remained largely unscathed.
2. **The Official NSO Metric** - According to the latest estimates from the National Statistical Office (NSO), GDP growth for the 2025–2026 fiscal year reached **7.7%**. This final print stands slightly higher than the NSO's second advance estimate of 7.6% released in February, moves above the potential growth rate of 7% noted in the recent Economic Survey, and significantly beats the projections made by policymakers at the start of the year.
3. **Demand Dynamics** - This performance stood out due to a combination of sustained high growth measured through rebased GDP alongside benign inflation, which printed at a lower-than-expected **2.1%**. High-frequency indicators—including robust auto sales and strong retail credit growth—confirmed that domestic demand held up firmly during the final quarter.

4. **Primary Growth Engines** – Private consumption and gross investments functioned as the primary drivers of this expansion, growing at 7.7% and 8.2% respectively.

Compounding Support Factors in 2025–2026 –

1. **Front-Loaded Exports** – The initial impact of high tariffs imposed by the United States was lower than feared because exporters front-loaded their shipments.
2. **Robust Service Lines** – Services exports maintained strong momentum, while fast-growing manufacturing niches like electronics manufacturing helped limit overall trade damage.
3. **The "Good Luck" Baseline** – Low international crude oil prices and a normal monsoon season acted as crucial structural stabilizers, supporting growth while keeping inflation securely under control.
4. **Coordinated Interventions** – The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee supported demand through timely rate cuts, while the government implemented supportive fiscal measures. These interventions included rationalizing GST rates, providing income tax relief, and expanding direct benefit transfers at the state level to strengthen household purchasing power and improve business sentiment.

3. The Current Fiscal Year – Moderating Growth Projections

In contrast to the previous year, economic conditions are becoming more challenging, leading to downward revisions in growth expectations as downside risks begin to materialize –

1. **Crisil Growth Trajectory** – Crisil expects real GDP growth to slow down to 6.6% from the 7.7% recorded last fiscal year.
2. **Central Bank Alignment** – In its June monetary policy review, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) similarly pared its growth outlook to **6.6%** while maintaining status-quo policy rates and stances.
3. **The Investment Disconnect** – While the central government is highly likely to maintain its public investment and capital expenditure momentum, a pick-up in private corporate investment faces delays due to the highly uncertain external environment.
4. **The Nominal vs. Real Divergence** – While real GDP growth faces a slowdown, nominal GDP growth is set to print higher. This gap is driven directly by higher underlying inflation visible across both the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

4. External Shocks and the Imported Inflation Vector

The primary driver behind the weakening growth-inflation mix is a series of external supply shocks –

1. **The Energy Transmission Shock** – The ongoing West Asia conflict has introduced a major energy shock alongside wider international trade disruptions. This friction has caused a sharp rise in global freight rates and maritime insurance costs, intensifying systemic uncertainty on top of unresolved tariff shocks from 2025.
2. **Crude Price Pressures** – Crude oil prices are expected to average \$90–\$95 per barrel during the current fiscal year, representing a significant increase compared to the \$70 per barrel average recorded in the previous fiscal year.
3. **The Vulnerability Coefficient** – India's high dependence on imported energy increases its vulnerability to external price spikes and supply chain disruptions. Higher input costs directly reduce the availability of energy at affordable prices, weighing on economic expansion. The manufacturing, construction, and contact-intensive service sectors (such as travel, transport, and restaurants) face the most immediate margin pressures.
4. **Export Destination Slowdowns** – Expected economic slowdowns across major export destinations—including the United States, Europe, and West Asia—are likely to reduce market opportunities for India's goods exports.

5. **The Price Transmission Path** – The upside risks to inflation have begun to materialize, initially presenting more clearly in wholesale numbers than retail indices. WPI inflation, which responds quickly to global commodity shocks, rose to 8.3% in April, while CPI inflation remained temporarily benign at 3.5%.
6. **Consumer-Level Risks** – Crisil expects headline CPI inflation to rise to 5.1% as manufacturers gradually pass their rising input costs onto final consumers. Furthermore, the government has begun passing higher crude prices down to retail petrol and diesel costs, creating direct and indirect upward pressure on inflation that is exacerbated by a weakening rupee.

5. Domestic Vulnerabilities – Climate and Financial Squeezes

Beyond external shocks, domestic agricultural and financial conditions add further challenges –

1. **The El Niño Headwind** – Meteorological forecasts indicating an El Niño pattern that could reduce rainfall to **90% of the long-period average** present a major dual headwind for both growth and inflation. While a positive development of the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) could provide some offset, it remains too early to predict its exact impact, keeping monsoon risks tilted to the downside.
2. **Food Inflation Triggers** – Food inflation faces upward pressure from disrupted agricultural output caused by heatwaves and below-normal rainfall expectations. This risk is confirmed by the RBI's household survey of inflation expectations, which indicates rising inflationary expectations among consumers.
3. **Tightening Financial Conditions** – According to the *Crisil Financial Conditions Index*, domestic financial conditions tightened significantly during March and April. This squeeze was driven by foreign capital outflows, a sharp depreciation of the rupee, and rising sovereign bond yields. These tighter financial conditions risk driving up borrowing costs, weighing on corporate investment decisions, and lowering overall business confidence.

6. The Mitigation Cushion and Policy Space Constraints

The text details the remaining economic stabilizers alongside a tightening of policy options –

1. **The Corporate Balance Sheet Cushion** – On the positive side, Indian companies maintain strong balance sheets. The median debt-to-equity ratio currently stands at a low of 0.45, providing an important financial cushion for a majority of medium and large corporates to weather the shock.
2. **Evaporation of Monetary Space** – However, the available policy space to support growth through easy monetary policy has largely evaporated due to rising inflation risks.
3. **The Fiscal Policy Balance Act** – Fiscal policy must balance several conflicting priorities. The government must support MSMEs and manage a rising fertilizer subsidy bill—driven by global input shocks—while accelerating efforts to improve domestic energy security and affordability.

7. Way Forward – Activating Medium-Term Domestic Growth Drivers

With global shocks and protectionist geopolitical alignments becoming more frequent, India must activate medium-term growth drivers that remain within its direct domestic control –

1. **Removing Structural Bottlenecks** – Focusing on eliminating operational bottlenecks within the domestic economy to lower transaction costs.
2. **Accelerating Ease of Doing Business** – Fast-tracking administrative ease of doing business reforms to make domestic markets more efficient.
3. **Pushing Remaining Structural Reforms** – Moving forward with remaining economic reforms to revive lagging private corporate capital expenditure (capex).
4. **Realizing Trade Pact Volumes** – Actively executing and leveraging recently signed foreign trade agreements (FTAs) to realize India's structural export potential.

Source – <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/amid-rising-frequency-of-global-shocks-a-moment-to-activate-growth-drivers-within-domestic-control-10728750/>

Question

"As external shocks and climate uncertainties narrow the available space for conventional monetary and fiscal interventions, India must shift its focus toward internal structural reforms. Analyze this statement in light of current growth–inflation challenges and suggest domestic policy options to sustain economic momentum." (250 Words, 15 Marks)

1. Introduction

India's economic trajectory highlights a challenging growth–inflation mix. While the National Statistical Office (NSO) reported a strong 7.7% GDP growth for the 2025–2026 fiscal year, current projections by Crisil and the RBI expect real GDP growth to moderate to 6.6%. This slowdown, paired with rising inflation risks, shows that the external "good luck" factors that previously insulated the economy have turned adverse, limiting the scope for traditional policy interventions.

2. Narrowing of Conventional Policy Space

The intersection of international and domestic shocks restricts the efficacy of standard policy tools –

1. **Monetary Policy Constraints** – Wholesale price pressures—visible in April's 8.3% WPI inflation—are gradually passing through to consumer prices, with headline CPI projected to rise to 5.1%. Worsened by capital outflows, a weaker rupee, and tightening financial conditions, the RBI's ability to support growth through rate cuts has largely evaporated.
2. **Fiscal Policy Pressures** – The fiscal room is constrained by global energy shocks, with crude oil expected to average \$90–\$95 per barrel. This spikes the cost of imported inputs, forcing the state to manage a rising fertilizer subsidy bill and support vulnerable MSMEs while attempting to maintain its public infrastructure spending.
3. **Supply-Side Vulnerabilities** – Agricultural risks from an El Niño forecast indicating rainfall at 90% of the long-period average threaten to drive up food inflation, further testing the limits of standard demand-side management.

3. Activating Internal Policy Options

To sustain economic momentum amid frequent global shocks and rising protectionism, India must utilize growth drivers within its direct domestic control –

1. **Leveraging Corporate Financial Health** – Policymakers can capitalize on strong corporate balance sheets, where the median debt-to-equity ratio sits at a low of 0.45. Fast-tracking ease of doing business reforms and removing administrative bottlenecks can encourage these companies to transition from cash preservation to active private capital expenditure (capex).
2. **Insulating the Energy Architecture** – Minimizing vulnerability to volatile international oil prices by accelerating domestic green energy transition, improving grid infrastructure, and developing local manufacturing supply chains.
3. **Maximizing Trade Pact Utilization** – Offsetting slowing demand in traditional Western markets by actively leveraging and realizing the export potential of recently signed foreign trade agreements (FTAs).

Conclusion

Relying on external economic indicators or easy monetary tools is no longer a viable path for long-term stability. While India's corporate resilience provides a solid foundation, navigating global uncertainties requires deep structural improvements. By removing domestic bottlenecks, streamlining

business regulations, and diversifying trade channels through active FTAs, India can build a self-sustaining economic model capable of securing steady growth despite international shocks.

Source - <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/amid-rising-frequency-of-global-shocks-a-moment-to-activate-growth-drivers-within-domestic-control-10728750/>

3. India's Three Health Revolutions – From Scarcity to Access to Excess (MT)

General Studies Paper - General Studies Paper III – Human Resource Development & Social Sector

Topic - Public Health and Healthcare Systems

Sub-Topic - Demographic Transition and Health Transition

Introduction

India's public health journey has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past several decades. The country has moved from widespread undernutrition, high mortality, and limited healthcare access to improved life expectancy, declining child mortality, and expanded healthcare services. However, alongside these achievements, India now faces a new challenge—an increasing burden of lifestyle-related diseases, obesity, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), creating a complex dual burden of disease.

1. First Health Revolution – Combating Scarcity and Survival Challenges

Focus on Reducing Mortality

1. Early public health efforts concentrated on reducing deaths from infectious diseases.
2. Expansion of vaccination programmes and disease-control initiatives.

Improvement in Food Security

1. Green Revolution improved food availability.
2. Reduced large-scale food shortages and famine-like conditions.

Expansion of Basic Healthcare

1. Growth of primary healthcare infrastructure.
2. Improved access to essential health services in rural and urban areas.

Outcomes

1. Increased life expectancy.
2. Significant reduction in infant and child mortality rates.
3. Better maternal healthcare outcomes.

2. Second Health Revolution – Expanding Access and Inclusion

Universalisation of Health Services

1. Expansion of institutional deliveries and maternal care.
2. Increased immunisation coverage.

Improved Nutrition Interventions

1. Strengthening of child and maternal nutrition programmes.
2. Focus on reducing stunting, wasting, and undernutrition.

Enhanced Public Health Infrastructure

1. Expansion of healthcare facilities and frontline health workers.
2. Greater reach of government welfare schemes.

Outcomes

1. Improved health indicators across age groups.

2. Better survival rates for mothers and children.
3. Increased healthcare utilisation.

3. Third Health Revolution – Rise of Lifestyle Diseases

Changing Consumption Patterns

1. Increased consumption of processed foods, sugar, salt, and unhealthy fats.
2. Growing dependence on sedentary lifestyles.

Urbanisation and Behavioural Changes

1. Reduced physical activity.
2. Increased screen time and work-related stress.

Growing Burden of NCDs

1. Rising prevalence of obesity.
2. Increase in diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, and cancers.

Health Transition

1. Shift from communicable diseases to chronic lifestyle-related illnesses.
2. Emergence of a "double burden" where undernutrition and obesity coexist.

4. Persistent Nutrition Challenges

Undernutrition Remains a Concern

1. Stunting and wasting continue among children.
2. Nutritional deficiencies affect long-term human capital development.

Anaemia

1. High prevalence among women and children.
2. Adversely impacts productivity, learning, and health outcomes.

Regional Inequalities

1. Significant variations across states and socio-economic groups.
2. Vulnerable communities remain disproportionately affected.

5. Economic and Social Implications

Human Capital Loss

1. Poor health affects educational outcomes and workforce productivity.
2. Increased healthcare expenditure burdens households.

Rising Healthcare Costs

1. Chronic diseases require long-term treatment and management.
2. Increased pressure on healthcare systems.

Productivity Challenges

1. Growing NCD burden affects labour force participation and economic growth.

6. Need for Preventive Healthcare

Promote Healthy Lifestyles

1. Encourage balanced diets and regular physical activity.
2. Reduce consumption of ultra-processed foods.

Strengthen Public Awareness

1. Health education campaigns targeting nutrition and lifestyle choices.
2. Promote behavioural change interventions.

Early Detection and Screening

1. Expand screening for diabetes, hypertension, and other NCDs.

2. Improve preventive healthcare services.

Integrated Health Policy

1. Address nutrition, sanitation, healthcare, and lifestyle factors together.
2. Adopt a life-cycle approach to health.

7. Way Forward

Shift from Treatment to Prevention

1. Prioritise preventive and promotive healthcare.
2. Reduce disease burden before it becomes chronic.

Strengthen Primary Healthcare

1. Enhance community-level health services.
2. Improve access to affordable preventive care.

Nutrition-Sensitive Development

1. Integrate health objectives into agriculture, education, and social welfare policies.
2. Promote healthy food environments.

Data-Driven Policymaking

1. Use health surveys and digital health systems to identify emerging trends.
2. Design targeted interventions based on evidence.

Conclusion

India's health journey reflects remarkable progress from combating scarcity and infectious diseases to expanding healthcare access. However, rising lifestyle diseases and persistent nutritional deficiencies present new challenges. Sustaining health gains requires a shift toward preventive healthcare, healthy lifestyles, and integrated public health policies that address both undernutrition and overnutrition simultaneously.

Source - <https://www.pressreader.com/india/mint-ahmedabad/20260608/282054808715224?srsId=AfmBOoowjkYuGo7AA4cPi47nZUfFYfrB-Rj6pc93aEuXisUa6D8a7sfD>

Question

Q. India's health profile is undergoing a transition from infectious diseases and undernutrition to lifestyle-related diseases and non-communicable disorders. Examine the factors driving this transition and suggest measures to address emerging public health challenges. (250 Words)

Introduction

India has achieved significant improvements in life expectancy, maternal health, and child survival. However, economic growth, urbanisation, and changing lifestyles have led to a growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), creating a dual challenge of undernutrition and lifestyle-related illnesses.

Factors Driving Health Transition

Demographic and Economic Changes

1. Rising incomes and urbanisation have altered dietary habits and lifestyles.
2. Increased life expectancy has expanded the population vulnerable to chronic diseases.

Lifestyle Changes

1. Greater consumption of processed foods and sugary products.
2. Declining physical activity and increasing sedentary behaviour.

Epidemiological Transition

1. Reduction in communicable diseases due to improved healthcare.
2. Rise in NCDs such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, and obesity.

Persistent Nutritional Deficits

1. Continued prevalence of anaemia, stunting, and wasting among vulnerable groups.
2. Coexistence of undernutrition and obesity.

Measures Required

Strengthen Preventive Healthcare

1. Promote healthy diets, exercise, and behavioural change campaigns.
2. Expand community-based health education programmes.

Early Screening and Detection

1. Increase screening for major NCDs through primary healthcare systems.
2. Strengthen digital health monitoring.

Improve Nutrition Security

1. Promote balanced diets and reduce dependence on ultra-processed foods.
2. Enhance maternal and child nutrition interventions.

Build Resilient Healthcare Systems

1. Strengthen primary healthcare infrastructure and workforce.
2. Integrate NCD prevention into public health programmes.

Conclusion

India's health transition reflects developmental success but also new public health risks. A preventive, nutrition-sensitive, and people-centric healthcare approach is essential to address the growing burden of lifestyle diseases while continuing efforts against undernutrition and health inequalities.

Source - <https://www.pressreader.com/india/mint-ahmedabad/20260608/282054808715224?srltid=AfmBOoowjkYuGo7AA4cPi47nZUfFYfrB-Rj6pc93aEuXisUa6D8a7sfD>

4. Advaita Vedanta And Science – Understanding the Difference Between Knowledge and Experience (TS)

General Studies Paper – General Studies Paper IV – Ethics, Integrity and Aptitude

Topic – Indian Philosophical Traditions

Sub-Topic – Role of Knowledge and Experience

Introduction

Advaita Vedanta is one of India's most profound philosophical traditions, emphasizing the unity of existence and the non-dual nature of reality. While modern science seeks to understand the external world through observation and experimentation, Advaita explores the nature of consciousness and self-realisation through direct experience. Understanding the distinction between intellectual knowledge and lived experience is essential for appreciating both domains.

1. Nature of Scientific Knowledge

Objective and Empirical Approach

1. Science relies on observation, experimentation, and verification.
2. Knowledge is generated through evidence and logical reasoning.

3. Scientific theories explain the functioning of the physical universe.

Strengths of Science

1. Produces technological innovations.
2. Enables prediction and control of natural phenomena.
3. Expands understanding of matter, energy, and physical laws.

Limitations

1. Primarily studies observable and measurable reality.
2. Faces challenges in explaining subjective consciousness and inner experience.

2. Core Principles of Advaita Vedanta

Non-Dual Reality

1. Advaita means "non-duality" or the essential unity of existence.
2. It holds that the individual self and ultimate reality are fundamentally one.

Central Focus on Consciousness

1. Consciousness is viewed as the basis of all experience.
2. Reality is understood through self-inquiry and direct awareness.

Emphasis on Self-Realisation

1. Mere intellectual understanding is considered insufficient.
2. Personal experience and inner transformation are central.

3. Knowledge Versus Experience

Intellectual Understanding

1. Reading philosophical texts provides conceptual knowledge.
2. Logical analysis helps clarify ideas and remove misconceptions.

Experiential Realisation

1. True understanding emerges through reflection, meditation, and self-observation.
2. Experience transforms knowledge into lived wisdom.

Difference Between the Two

1. Information informs the mind.
2. Experience transforms perception and behaviour.

4. Relationship Between Science and Spirituality

Areas of Convergence

1. Both seek truth and understanding.
2. Both encourage disciplined inquiry and questioning.

Areas of Difference

1. Science studies external reality.
2. Spiritual traditions investigate inner consciousness.

Complementary Perspectives

1. Science explains how the universe functions.
2. Spiritual inquiry explores the meaning and experience of existence.

5. Relevance in the Modern World

Mental Well-being

1. Practices such as meditation improve focus and emotional balance.
2. Self-awareness helps manage stress and anxiety.

Ethical Development

1. Encourages compassion, empathy, and responsible conduct.
2. Promotes harmony between individual and society.

Holistic Education

1. Combines scientific reasoning with emotional and spiritual development.
2. Supports balanced personality growth.

6. Challenges in Contemporary Society

Information Overload

1. Easy access to knowledge often creates the illusion of understanding.
2. Conceptual familiarity may be mistaken for genuine wisdom.

Excessive Materialism

1. Overemphasis on external achievements can neglect inner development.
2. Rising mental health concerns highlight the need for self-awareness.

Fragmented Learning

1. Separation between scientific and philosophical education limits holistic growth.

7. Way Forward

Integrate Knowledge and Experience

1. Encourage both analytical thinking and reflective practices.
2. Balance intellectual learning with experiential understanding.

Promote Indian Knowledge Systems

1. Introduce philosophical traditions in a contemporary and accessible manner.
2. Foster interdisciplinary dialogue between science and philosophy.

Encourage Self-Inquiry

1. Develop critical thinking alongside introspection.
2. Promote lifelong learning focused on both external and internal growth.

Conclusion

Science and Advaita Vedanta address different dimensions of human understanding. While science explains the external world through evidence and experimentation, Advaita emphasizes direct experience of consciousness and self-awareness. A balanced approach that combines scientific inquiry with inner reflection can contribute to holistic human development and a deeper understanding of reality.

Source - <https://www.thestatesman.com/opinion/the-ultimate-reality-hack-1503603061.html>

Question

Q. Discuss the relationship between science and spirituality in the context of Advaita Vedanta. How can the integration of scientific inquiry and experiential wisdom contribute to holistic human development? (250 Words)

Introduction

Science and spirituality represent two important approaches to understanding reality. While science relies on empirical observation and experimentation, Advaita Vedanta focuses on the experiential realization of the non-dual nature of existence and consciousness.

Relationship Between Science and Advaita Vedanta

Common Objective

1. Both seek truth through systematic inquiry.
2. Both encourage questioning of assumptions and established beliefs.

Key Differences

1. Science studies observable phenomena and physical laws.
2. Advaita investigates consciousness and subjective experience.
3. Scientific knowledge is externally verifiable, whereas spiritual realization is experiential.

Areas of Complementarity

1. Science contributes technological and material progress.
2. Advaita promotes self-awareness, mental well-being, and ethical living.
3. Together they provide a comprehensive understanding of human existence.

Significance for Human Development**Mental and Emotional Well-being**

1. Practices such as meditation enhance concentration and emotional resilience.
2. Greater self-awareness reduces stress and psychological conflicts.

Ethical and Social Benefits

1. Encourages compassion, empathy, and responsible behaviour.
2. Supports social harmony and value-based living.

Holistic Education

1. Integrates rational thinking with reflective learning.
2. Develops intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of personality.

Conclusion

Science and Advaita Vedanta are not competing frameworks but complementary pathways to knowledge. Integrating scientific inquiry with experiential wisdom can promote balanced development, enrich human understanding, and contribute to a more harmonious society.

Source - <https://www.thestatesman.com/opinion/the-ultimate-reality-hack-1503603061.html>