

GS Foundation Program 2024 | D5 | Benchmark Assignment #158

Subjective Questions:

Q.1) The 1st World War was believed to be 'a war to end all wars'. However, the peace treaties failed to ensure this. Discuss. (15 marks, 250 words)

Q.2) Describe the reasons for the problem of communalism in the country and discuss the suitability of 6t Indian model of secularism in addressing this problem. (10 marks, 150 words)

Objective Questions:

Q.1) The central government has proposed to establish the C -PACE. It will be established for which of the following purposes?

- a) Facilitating easy exit for the companies
- b) Allowing easy registration of the companies
- c) Easy filing of the income tax
- d) Portal for searching sports talent

Q.2) With reference to Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Consider the following statements:

1. It is mandatory for all Centre, State and all government agencies to procure through the GeM portal.
2. It is developed by Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals (DGS&D) under Ministry of Finance.
3. It has made it mandatory for sellers to enter the Country of Origin while registering new products on GeM.

Which of the above-mentioned statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3 only

Q.3) Which of the following statements best define the term 'Blue Chip' companies, as often heard in the news?

- a) Top-performing stocks of only IT companies.
- b) Top companies involved in the fabrication of semi-conductor chips.
- c) Those companies that deal with commercial naval ships and trading.
- d) Large and well-recognized companies with a long history of sound financial performance.

Q.4) Consider the following statements with reference to the DISCOMs (Distribution Companies) in India:

1. Ujjwala Yojana is a scheme for improving the financial status of the DISCOMs
2. One of the key benefits of Feeder separation is to aid the economic well-being of DISCOMs
3. The draft Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2021 has proposed to delicense electricity distribution in India.
4. State-run power distribution companies (DISCOMs) were turned profitable in the financial year 2021.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 2 and 4 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1 and 4 only

Q.5) Consider the following statements with reference to the Industrial Sector in India:

1. The industrial sector's contribution to Indian GDP is around 25% in terms of Gross-Value Added.
2. India registered its highest ever annual FDI inflow in the financial year 2020-21.
3. Industrial sector employs roughly one-fourth of the total workforce in India.
4. Construction- sector accounts for around one third of new jobs created in post-liberalization India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1, 2, and 3 only
- c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

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Subjective Questions:

Q.1) The 1st World War was believed to be 'a war to end all wars'. However, the peace treaties failed to ensure this. Discuss.

Approach:

1. In Introduction, elaborate on the situation in Europe inflicted with rivalries among nations, which led to World War I and the intention of nations joining the war to end German Militarism and bringing peace.
2. Then argue how the peace treaties which were to prevent the outbreak of another war, eventually were one of the prime reasons, leading to another war.
3. Conclude by mentioning about how it led to start of World War Two.

Answer: First World War was a **global war originating in Europe that lasted from July 1914 to November 1918. More than 70 million military personnel**, including 60 million Europeans, were mobilized in one of the largest wars in history. The war drew in all the world's economic great powers, assembled in two opposing alliances: the Allies (the Russia, the France, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland) versus the Central Powers of Germany and Austria-Hungary.

After it was over, World War I was called "the war to end all wars" because it was considered a means to settle scores once and for all of petty frictions and differences that hitherto existed between countries. This prompted prolonged negotiations and **various treaties such as treaty of Versailles, treaty of St Germain (1919), treaty of Trianon (1920) and treaty of Sevres were signed**. Unfortunately, rather than end war, the harsh terms of these treaties set the stage for World War II.

Major reasons for the failure of peace treaties included:

1. The **Wilsonian principles** of abolition of secret diplomacy, providing freedom of navigation of seas both during peace and wartime and the removal of economic barriers between states were meant to prevent the outbreak of another war. However, the **biased interpretation of these principles** in favour of allied powers **crippled German economy and military**.
2. It imposed severe restrictions and violated its territorial integrity by carving out an assured access for Prussia to sea, by bringing the Saar mines according to the treaty within control of France for next 15 years.
3. It was later followed by **French violation of German territorial integrity** even further by occupying the Ruhr region following Germany's inability to pay the huge war indemnity that was imposed upon it according to the treaty.
4. **The Treaty of Versailles was a dictated peace** as the Germans were not allowed to be part of the negotiations. They could only put forward their opinion and criticism through writings. All their criticisms were ignored. Only the clause of loss of territory was the one where the Germans were compensated.

5. **The clause of disarmament of Germany** made it virtually impotent and the reparations charged upon the Germans were unjustified. Wilson's 14 points included 'all round decrease in armament' but it was only Germany which was disarmed and no other European power started disarmament. The limit on troops and arms made it difficult for Germany to maintain law and order.
6. **War Guilt Clause:** War Guilt clause, which **fixed responsibility of World War I solely on Germany** and its allies, was unjustified. It **served as a humiliation for the Germans**. The Allied Powers insisted on it as it made Germany legally liable to pay war reparations.
7. **War Reparations:** The huge War Reparations resulted in humiliation to the Germans. The amount of **6600 million pounds was too high and was aimed at keeping Germany weak economically** in the foreseeable future.
8. **The Treaty satisfied the "Big Three" - US, Britain and France**, since in their eyes it was a just peace, as it kept Germany weak, yet strong enough to stop the spread of communism; kept the French border with Germany safe from another German attack and created the organization, the League of Nations, that would end warfare throughout the world.
9. **Rise of Hitler:** The humiliating conditions of the treaty rankled Germans for years and in many ways led to the rise of Nazism in Germany. Without the support of the German people, the rise of Hitler would not have been possible. Hitler's propaganda against the Treaty of Versailles capitalized on the anger among the Germans against the humiliation the treaty brought. The German public thus approved of Hitler's action.
10. **Russia** did not gain much from peace settlement as the communist regime was not invited to the negotiations.
11. **Free Trade clause neglected:** Free trade among nations was part of Wilson's 14 points. But trade barriers were introduced by most of the newly created nation states. This made the recovery of Austrian economy very difficult.
12. **Partial implementation of principle of 'Economic Viability':** It was ironical that Allied Powers used the principle of 'Economic Viability' to justify that the newly created states needed areas having German population but the union between Austria and Germany was ignored even when it made perfect economic sense.

Thus, while largely idealistic considerations were the initial starting point for the treaty of Paris, the end result was a jingoistic, excessively harsh treaty which totally marginalized the defeated axis powers and thus produced significant resentment which ultimately coupled with a weak league of nations played an important role in the outbreak of WW2.

Q.2) Describe the reasons for the problem of communalism in the country and discuss the suitability of 6t Indian model of secularism in addressing this problem.

Approach: Introduce the answer by defining communalism. In the body, discuss reasons for the problem of secularism in the country. In the next part, discuss the suitability of Indian model of secularism in checking communalism. Lastly, suggest ways to make this model more resilient. Conclude by emphasizing the importance of checking the misuse of secular provisions.

In the Indian context, communalism can be defined as **strong affinity to one's own religious community** to an extent that **mutual co-existence with others become difficult**. The various reason for the problem of communalism are:

1. **Historical reasons:**
 - a) The British **policy of divide and rule** and appeasement. E.g., **separate electorates**.
 - b) **Partition of the country** created religious fault-lines in the country, which erupt in form of communal tensions.
2. **Vote bank/identity politics:** Mobilisation of people on the **religious lines for electoral gains**. E.g., **pitching the interest of one religious community against other**.
3. **Socio-economic backwardness:** **Limited social mobility, restricted access to opportunities for jobs, education etc**. E.g., **Sachar committee report** highlights poor socio-economic indicators in the Muslim community.
4. **Administrative failure:** Failure of the government/administration in **checking the spread of the nuisance**. E.g., **the response of the union government during the 1984 Sikh riots**.
5. **Mass media's role:** In present context, social, print, and electronic media have played negative role in furthering the problem of communalism. E.g., fake news, sensationalisation of news etc.

The suitability of the Indian model of secularism in **addressing the problem of communalism** can be seen from:

Suitability	Shortcoming
1. Indian secularism accommodates the fears and apprehensions of the minorities. E.g., recognition given to the personal laws of minority community.	1. The absence of a Universal Civil Code restricts the development of a pan-national identity .
2. Allows the use of religious symbols in public places. E.g., wearing burqa, turban, kirpan etc., is permitted in public places.	2. It is argued by experts that the Indian model of secularism has become a tool for the appeasement of the minority communities . E.g., mobilization of people on religious lines during elections.
3. Indian secularism recognises minority rights and provide them with cultural and educational protection to prevent their alienation . E.g., article 29 and 30 of the constitution.	3. The interventionist nature of Indian secularism often results in hurting the religious sentiments . E.g., allowing women to enter the premises of Sabarimala temple; banning of triple talaq; furore over Madras HC's decision over Hijab etc.
4. Indian secularism facilitates both individual and community-based rights . E.g., government sponsored/funded pilgrimages.	4. Vulnerable to misuse/manipulation in the hands of vested interests . E.g., prosel-ytization in the name of religious preaching .
5. Indian secularism facilitates socio-economic development of minorities. E.g., Nai Udaan, Nai Roshni, Naya Savera etc.	

In order to create a **more resilient model of secularism**, there is a requirement to:

1. Progress in a **step-by-step manner towards the creation of a Uniform Civil Code**, which is also an objective of the constitution.
2. The **misuse of religious identities** for vested interest should be checked through institutional mechanisms. E.g., ECI should check communal undertones during elections.
3. The **civil society and religious leaders** should come together in order to spread awareness against the ill-effects of communalism.
4. **Behavioural changes** in the people can play an important role in checking the spread of communalism. E.g., **inter-faith marriages, checking ghettoization**.
5. **Socio-economic development** is the most effective **antidote against communal mobilization of people**. E.g., people with jobs/assets, education etc., are less likely to fall prey to hate mongers.

Indian model of secularism **allows one to practice one's religion in the most holistic fashion**. However, the **tendencies of misusing the secular provisions need to be checked** effectively through collaborative efforts.

Objective Questions:

Q.1) The central government has proposed to establish the C -PACE. It will be established for which of the following purposes?

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Ans) a

Exp) Option a is correct

In the Union Budget 2022-23 government proposed the establishment of the Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE). It will be responsible for process re-engineering. It will be established to facilitate and speed up the voluntary winding-up of the companies from the currently required 2 years to less than 6 months. It has been established in context that several IT-based systems have been established for accelerated registration of new companies. However, there was an absence of system for accelerated corporate exit.

Q.2) With reference to Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Consider the following statements:

1. It is mandatory for all Centre, State and all government agencies to procure through the GeM portal.
2. It is developed by Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals (DGS&D) under Ministry of Finance.
3. It has made it mandatory for sellers to enter the Country of Origin while registering new products on GeM.

Which of the above-mentioned statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3 only

Ans) b

Exp) Option b is correct

Statement 1 is incorrect - The procurement of goods and services by Ministries and the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) is mandatory for goods and services available on GeM. GeM is not mandatory for State Governments. It is left to their discretion to procure through GeM. However, some State Government organizations are making procurement through GeM viz Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh etc.

Statement 2 is incorrect - Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals (DGS&D) comes under the Ministry of Commerce and not Finance. The nodal ministry for Government E-Marketplace portal is Ministry of Commerce.

Statement 3 is correct - GeM has made it mandatory for sellers to enter the Country of Origin while registering all new products on GeM. GeM has also enabled a provision for indication of the percentage of local content in products. With this new feature, now, the Country of Origin as well as the local content percentage are visible in the marketplace for all items. GeM has taken this significant step to promote 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

Q.3) Which of the following statements best define the term 'Blue Chip' companies, as often heard in the news?

- a) Top-performing stocks of only IT companies.
- b) Top companies involved in the fabrication of semi-conductor chips.
- c) Those companies that deal with commercial naval ships and trading.
- d) Large and well-recognized companies with a long history of sound financial performance.

Ans) d

Exp) Option d is correct

Blue chip stocks are shares of very large and well recognised companies with a long history of sound financial performance and such companies are called 'Blue Chip' companies. These stocks are known to have capabilities to endure tough market conditions and give high returns in good market conditions. Blue chip stocks generally cost high, as they have good reputation and are often market leaders in their respective industries.

Q.4) Consider the following statements with reference to the DISCOMs (Distribution Companies) in India:

1. Ujjwala Yojana is a scheme for improving the financial status of the DISCOMs
2. One of the key benefits of Feeder separation is to aid the economic well-being of DISCOMs
3. The draft Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2021 has proposed to delicense electricity distribution in India.
4. State-run power distribution companies (DISCOMs) were turned profitable in the financial year 2021.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 2 and 4 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1 and 4 only

Ans) c

Exp) Option c is correct

Statement 1 is incorrect: Ujjwala Yojana is a scheme of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for providing LPG connections to women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households. It is Ujjwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) is the financial turnaround and revival package for electricity distribution companies of India initiated by the Government of India.

Statement 2 is correct: In feeder separation, a dedicated feeder supplies 8-10 hours of 3-phase power to farmers and is completely offline otherwise while other feeders serve continuous-power to non-farmers (for domestic use). This reduces the load on distribution companies and reduce the AT&C (Aggregate Technical and Commercial) losses. Thus, aiding the economic well-being of the DISCOMs.

Statement 3 is correct: The draft Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2021 has proposed to delicense electricity distribution to reduce entry barriers to this segment of the power sector. Delicensing the sector will enable multiple distribution companies to operate in the same area of supply leading to competition and choice to the consumers

Statement 4 is incorrect: Losses of state-run power distribution companies (DISCOMs) are estimated to have surged to Rs. 90,000 crore in FY21, as per a recent report released by NITI Aayog.

Q.5) Consider the following statements with reference to the Industrial Sector in India:

1. The industrial sector's contribution to Indian GDP is around 25% in terms of Gross-Value Added.
2. India registered its highest ever annual FDI inflow in the financial year 2020-21.
3. Industrial sector employs roughly one-fourth of the total workforce in India.
4. Construction- sector accounts for around one third of new jobs created in post-liberalization India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1, 2, and 3 only
- c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans) d

Exp) Option d is correct

Statement 1 is correct: The service sector is the biggest sector of India with the Gross Value Added at current prices as 96.54 lakh crore in 2020-21. The industry sector lags behind it with 25.92% contribution and the agriculture sector is at the third place with 20.19% contribution.

Statement 2 is correct: The country registered the highest ever annual foreign direct investment (FDI) Inflow of \$81.97 billion (provisional figure) in the financial year 2020-21, according to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. FDI inflows in the last seven financial years (2014-21) stands at \$440.27 billion, which is nearly 58 per cent of the total FDI inflow in the last 21 financial years. **Statement 3 is correct:** As per the available data, the industrial sector employs about 25.12% of the total workforce in India. That is roughly around one-fourth of the total workforce.

Statement 4 is correct: India's liberalization in 1991 was premised on the idea that it would enable millions of Indian workers to move away from low-productivity farm jobs to high-productivity factory jobs. However, this has not been the case. Nearly a third of new jobs added in the Indian economy in the post-liberalization era have been in the construction sector alone, the data shows.