

GS Foundation Program 2025 | D6/D8 | Benchmark Assignment #94

Subjective Questions:

Q.1) India's internal security is vulnerable to threats, tensions and conflicts originating both from indigenous and exogenous sources. Discuss.

Internal security refers to the measures, policies, and actions taken by a government to **maintain law and order, protect the sovereignty of the state, and ensure the safety and security of its citizens within its own borders**. India's security is influenced by events due to historical, geographical and demographic imperatives.

Indigenous Sources:

1. **Colonial Legacy and Social Division:** The historical experience of British colonialism, marked by policies of divide and rule, has left a lasting impact on social divisions within India. The seeds of inequality sown during this period continue to fuel unrest, as seen in various peasant movements.
2. **Top-Down Political Assimilation:** Centralized planning and control of resources have led to regional disparities, fostering regionalism and secessionist movements. The insurgency in the Northeast is a stark example of this phenomenon.
3. **Ethno-Nationalism and Identity Politics:** Ethno-nationalistic sentiments and identity politics contribute to internal conflicts. For instance, the Tamil identity issue has spilled over into India's relationship with Sri Lanka.
4. **Mutual State of Insecurity:** Communal tensions and incidents like riots stem from a mutual state of insecurity among different communities. The issue of lynching reflects the breakdown of law and order in certain instances.
5. **Social Fragmentation:** Communalism, identity politics, and the impact of reports like the Mandal Commission contribute to social fragmentation. These factors often result in tensions and conflicts that challenge internal security.
6. **Failure of Resource Redistribution:** The state's failure to redistribute resources equitably has led to deprivation and discontent, providing fertile ground for movements like Naxalism.
7. **Politicization of Democratic Institutions:** Democratic institutions facing politicization, non-partisan decision-making, and bias can contribute to human rights violations. Instances of security forces acting with impunity may erode public trust.

Exogenous Sources:

1. **Trans-Border Migration:** The issue of trans-border migration, especially from **Bangladesh and Myanmar**, plays a role in conflicts in the Northeast, contributing to insurgencies.
2. **Cybersecurity Threats:** Cyber threats, including espionage, data theft, and snooping, pose a modern challenge to internal security, requiring advanced technological countermeasures. **Eg: The personal details of approximately 7.9 million customers of the Mumbai-based stock broking firm Angel One were exposed.**

3. **External Support to Non-State Actors:** Non-state actors receiving support in terms of funds, arms, and training from external entities, such as **China's alleged support to certain insurgent groups**, adds a layer of complexity.
4. **Narcotics and Illicit Financing:** The presence of the Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle regions contributes to issues like **drug smuggling, narcotics trade, and illicit financing** through channels like hawala.
5. **Arms Smuggling:** Porous borders facilitate arms smuggling, which can escalate conflicts and pose a direct threat to national security.
6. **Geopolitical Dynamics:** The ever-changing geopolitical landscape, including events like the **rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan**, can have direct implications for India's security.

India must adopt a holistic approach to address these challenges. Strengthening intelligence, fortifying border security, promoting inclusive development, addressing identity-based grievances, and fostering international cooperation are imperative to safeguarding internal security. A nuanced and adaptable strategy is crucial to effectively navigate the complexities posed by both indigenous and exogenous sources of threats.

Q.2) Contract farming not only creates new markets for farmers' produce and positively impacts the production process but also enhances farmer vulnerability. Discuss.

Contract farming refers to an agreement between farmers and marketing firms for the production and supply of agricultural products under forward agreements, frequently at predetermined prices.

It creates new markets for farmers produce and positively impacts the production process

The contracting firm or company also known as the sponsor provides all production support to the contracted farmers, including extension services with full protection of land rights.

1. The contract between farmers and buyers **insulates farmers from price risk**, helps them develop new skills, and opens new markets.
2. Contracting firms also provide farmers with **advanced technologies** suitable to a particular crop, which are otherwise unaffordable and inaccessible to the farmer.
3. **Improves the quality of crops** as inputs and production services are often supplied by the sponsor. This is usually done on credit through advances from the sponsor.
4. It **increases farmers' income** by creating an alternative market mechanism that links them to national and international markets.
5. Since 86 per cent of total landholdings in the country belong to the small and marginal category, it will have an indirect effect on farmers **forming FPOs and pooling their land** for increase in productivity.
6. It leads to **an assured supply of agricultural produce** resulting in better control over the factors of production.
7. Farmers get the opportunity for **diversification of crops** and learn about new crops that have demand in the market.

8. It helps in **skilling of farmers** as farmers learn to use resources efficiently like fertilizer, pesticides and get in touch with new technology in some cases.
9. Farmers no longer have the onus of **transporting their produce** to the mandis, as sponsors usually collect the produce from the farm gate — thus reducing farmers' cost and, thereby, translating into increased incomes.

However, it also enhances farmer's vulnerability

1. **It bars farmers from growing certain varieties of seeds** as it could be grown only by contracting parties bringing the issue of "farmer privilege" and "seed sovereignty" as seen in PepsiCo case. (PepsiCo had sued the farmers for growing a certain variety of potatoes reserved specifically for its chips product. After a huge public uproar, PepsiCo withdrew the case)
2. **Monopsony:** Typically, contract firms enter into an agreement with farmers to grow differentiated crops. This turns the firm into a sole buyer and farmers into price-takers. Contracting firms can exploit this situation to their advantage by offering lower prices to farmers.
3. **Information asymmetry:** Contracting firms do not have complete information on productivity and land quality. This can lead to a situation where farmers produce below-quality crops.
4. **Lack of awareness:** Farmers sometimes do not understand contract specifications like the quantity and quality to be produced, or the effect of price change as a result buyers may penalize farmers.
5. **Inefficient management** or marketing problems can mean that quotas are manipulated so that not all contracted production is purchased.
6. **Risk of failure:** When growing new crops, farmers face the risks of both market failure and production problems.
7. **Lack of options:** Farmers tied to a contract are unable to benefit from high prices on the open market.
8. **Loss of traditional knowledge and cultural practices:** Imposing standardized production practices may lead to a loss of traditional knowledge and cultural practices. This can weaken communities' resilience and adaptability to changing environments.

To tap the full potential of contract farming, Government of India proposed a **Model Contract farming Act in 2018**. It aims to promote and facilitate contract farming, a system where farmers agree to provide pre-determined quantities of produce at pre-determined prices to buyers, usually agribusinesses or processors. It's important to note that while the model act served as a template, individual states could make modifications based on their specific agricultural needs and conditions. Each state was encouraged to adopt and adapt the model act to suit its requirements. Therefore, the specific provisions of the contract farming act may vary slightly from state to state.

Objective Questions:

Q.1) Korra, Kodon, Kutki and Hraka are related to which of the following?

- ☐ a) Variety of Millet crops.
- ☐ b) Cropping seasons in Southern India.
- ☐ c) Water conservation technique in central India.
- ☐ d) Tribal communities in central India.

Ans) a

Exp) Option a is the correct answer

Option a is correct. Millets are short duration warm weather crops. These are coarse grain crops and are used for both food and fodder. Some of the major millet varieties are Jawar, Bajra, Ragi, Korra, Kodon, Kutki, Hraka, Bauti, Rajgira. In India, Jawar, Bajra and Ragi are grown on large areas, but unfortunately area under these crops has drastically reduced over the years.

Q.2) "It is a kharif crop which is grown in areas of 40-50 cm annual rainfall. It is rarely irrigated and seldom grown in areas with annual rainfall of more than 100 cm. The ideal temperature for it is 25°C -30°C. Bright sunshine after light showers is very useful in the early stages of growth. It can be grown on poor light sandy soils and upland gravelly soils.

It is mainly grown in Rajasthan" In the above paragraph, which crop of the following is described?

- ☐ a) Bajra
- ☐ b) Cotton
- ☐ c) Tobacco
- ☐ d) Gram

Ans) a

Exp) Option a is the correct answer

Option a is correct. Bajra is a kharif crop which is grown in areas of 40-50 cm annual rainfall. It is rarely irrigated and seldom grown in areas with annual rainfall of more than 100 cm. The ideal temperature for it is 25°C -30°C. It can be grown on poor light sandy soils and upland gravelly soils. It is mainly grown in Rajasthan (around 40%).

Important Tips

- Cotton requires uniformly high temperature ranging between 21-30- degree temperature. The growth of cotton is retarded when the temperature falls below 20-degree temperature. An annual average rainfall of 50-100 cm of rainfall could be enough. Cotton is a kharif crop which requires 6-8 months to mature.
- Tobacco can withstand a wide range of temperature varying from 16-35- degree temperature. It normally requires 100 cm of annual average rainfall. It requires a well-drained friable sandy loam, not too rich in organic matter but rich in mineral salts allowing full development of roots.
- Gram is a rabi crop. It can be grown in a wide range of climatic conditions but it prefers mild cool and comparatively dry climate with 20-25-degree temperature and 40-50 cm rainfall. It is the most important of all the pulses and accounts for 37% of the production.

Q.3) With reference to pulses cultivation in India consider the following statements:

1. India is the largest producer as well as the consumer of pulses in the world.
2. Pulses crops except Arhar can fix nitrogen from the air.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- ☐ a) 1 only
- ☐ b) 2 only
- ☐ c) Both 1 and 2
- ☐ d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans) a

Exp) Option a is the correct answer

Statement 1 is correct. India is the largest producer as well as the consumer of pulses in the world. India has now almost achieved self-reliance in pulses. India's pulses productivity is 23.62% of world's total productivity.

Statement 2 is incorrect. All pulses crops including arhar help in restoring soil fertility by fixing nitrogen from the air. Therefore, these are mostly grown in rotation with other crops. Major pulse producing states in India are Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Q.4) With reference to coffee cultivation in India consider the following statements:

1. It requires a cold climate with low rainfall below 100 cm.
2. It is generally grown on well drained plains.
3. Laterite soil is ideal for coffee plants.
4. It requires dry weather at the time of ripening of berries.

Which of the statements given above is/are **incorrect**?

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

Ans) a

Exp) Option a is the correct answer

Statement 1 is incorrect. Coffee plants require **hot and humid climate**. It needs rainfall from **150 cm – 250 cm**.

Statement 2 is incorrect. This crop is grown on **hill slopes** because stagnant water is harmful for coffee plants.

Statement 3 is incorrect. **Loams (not Laterite soil)** containing iron and calcium are ideal for coffee plants.

Statement 4 is correct. **Dry weather is necessary at the time of ripening of the berries.**

Q.5) Consider the following statements about Pigeon pea cultivation in India:

1. Pigeon pea is cultivated over marginal lands in the dry areas in India.
2. Punjab contributes more than half of the total production of Pigeon pea.

Which of the following statements given above is/are correct?

- ☐ a) 1 only
- ☐ b) 2 only
- ☐ c) Both 1 and 2
- ☐ d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans) a

Exp) Option a is the correct answer.

Statement 1 is correct. Tur is the second important pulse crop in the country. It is also known as red gram or pigeon pea. **It is cultivated over marginal lands and under rainfed conditions in the dry areas of central and southern states of the country.**

Statement 2 is incorrect. Maharashtra alone contributes about one-third of the total production of Pigeon pea. Other leading producer states are Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.