

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS

The contours of India's 'formal jobs' crisis

- **In Context-** A detailed look at the Employees Provident Fund data reveals stagnation in formal employment in the country.

About EPF's data on employment

- Since 2017, the Indian government has been using the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) scheme's data as a measure of payroll employment and formal job creation in the country.
- The monthly data released as part of this initiative has generally shown net increases in the number of contributors and this has been portrayed as evidence of employment creation in the country.
- However, this is in stark variance with ground reports of unemployment and a dearth of jobs from various parts of the country.

Data highlights

- **Stagnancy:** Unlike the EPF monthly enrolment data, which generally depicts increases in contributors, the EPF Organization's (EPFO) annual reports reveal that the number of regular contributors to the scheme has remained relatively stagnant or even declined in recent years.
- **Regular contributors to the EPF scheme:** are those enrolled employees whose PF contributions are made on a regular basis during the year.
- This is in contrast to those employees who are merely enrolled into the scheme at some point, but whose contributions are irregular or stop shortly after.
- **Years of significant increase:** Between 2012 and 2022, the number of regular contributors to the EPF increased from 30.9 million to 46.3 million.
- A significant increase occurred in 2016-17, when the Indian government encouraged firms with private PFs to join the government's EPF and introduced other incentive schemes that paid the employer's share of PF contributions.
- **Slowdown:** In the past five years, when the effects of such incentives and firm enrolments somewhat stabilized, growth in regular contributors slowed down significantly.
- Between 2017 and 2022, the number of regular contributors increased only from 45.11 million to 46.33 million.
- Strikingly, this occurred during a time when overall enrolments in the EPF increased from 210.8 million to 277.4 million.

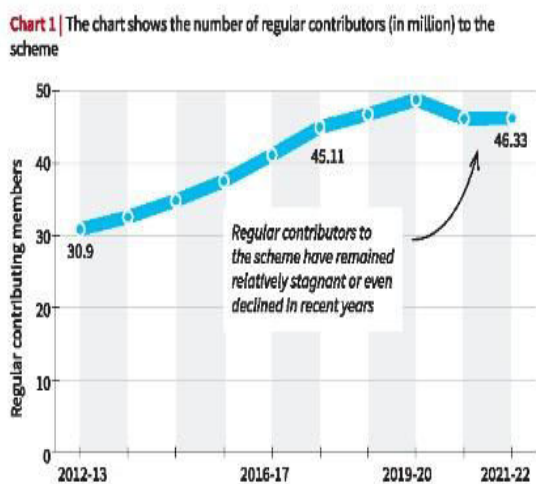
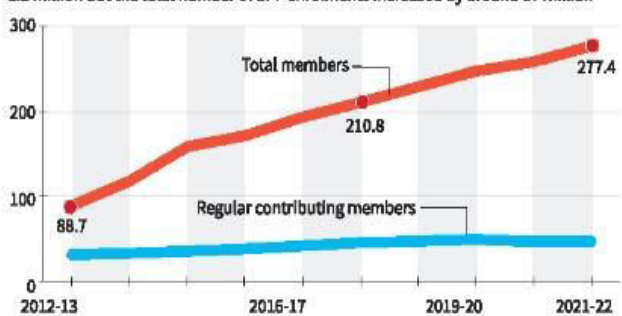


Chart 2 | The chart shows the overall enrolments and the number of regular contributors in millions, in the past five years, regular contributors increased by 1.2 million but the total number of EPF enrolments increased by around 67 million



What does this data signify?

Widening gaps:

- The number of people enrolled in the EPF can generally be expected to be higher than regular contributors due to issues of duplication and old membership data, but it is concerning that in recent years, the gap between them has been noticeably widening.

Considerably fewer new entrants:

- If the EPF data are to be considered as an indication of formal employment, then there appears to have been a net creation of only 1.2 million formal jobs in the past five years.

- For perspective, at current participation rates, there were an estimated 20-25 million new entrants into the Indian labour market.

✚ **Majority of casual/informal jobs:**

- The divergence between EPF enrolments and regular contributors indicates that the majority of enrolments into the EPF are linked to jobs that are of a temporary, subcontracted or casual variety where PF contributions are irregular or cease shortly.
- Thus, though the Indian economy appears to be creating jobs – these are not formal, regular well-paid jobs that can provide good quality, long-term employment.

Challenges

✚ **Absence of formal, well-paid, regular employment:**

- As India overtakes China as the most populous country in the world, it faces an increasingly educated and growing working-age population that requires good-quality employment.
- However, the relative absence of formal, well-paid, regular employment in the country is striking.

✚ **Expansion of India's middle class:**

- This trend inhibits the expansion of its middle class — a factor that was central to China's economic growth — but which has largely been missing in India.
- The lack of quality jobs in the Indian economy gets revealed in instances of large numbers of over-qualified youth applying for a few public or private sector job openings, showing a dissonance with claims of strong economic growth.

✚ **Role of pandemic:**

- The stagnation in formal employment in India can be partially attributed to the pandemic. In fact, the number of EPF contributors declined (somewhat predictably) during the COVID pandemic.

✚ **Neglect for labour data:**

- Unfortunately, over time the Indian government has neglected other sources of formal employment and labour data that could have been used to verify these numbers and trends.
- For instance, the employment market information collected by the Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGET) has not been published since 2013.
- The DGET data were historically the original source of formal sector payroll employment data in India (since the 1950s). The Reserve Bank of India utilised it as the main source for formal sector employment numbers and related calculations in the country. However, this data is no longer available, even to the country's central bank.

✚ **AI & possible job loss:**

- The other culprits are artificial intelligence and data analytics.
- According to experts, AI would take over 7,800 human jobs in the next five years as an eye-opener.
- AI could replace some back-office functions and human resources.
- Job opportunity & qualification mismatch:
- India presents a paradox of skill shortages while being labour surplus.
- Trucks are idle because of the shortage of drivers. The steel industry needs more metallurgists.
- The healthcare sector is short of nurses and technicians.
- The construction sector needs civil engineers, hi-tech welders, bricklayers, and so on.

✚ **Sector-specific mismatch:**

- India's economic growth has been largely services led, with a small pool of skills at the upper end, given a glaring failure in mass education, while capital intensity has increased in manufacturing overall in spite of our labour abundance.

✚ **Low participation of women:**

- One reason is essentially about the working conditions — such as law and order, efficient public transportation, violence against women, societal norms etc — being far from conducive for women to seek work.
- A lot of women in India are exclusively involved within their own homes (caring for their family) of their own volition.
- Lastly, it is also a question of adequate job opportunities for women.

Way Ahead

- The EPF scheme is potentially a good alternative source to gauge payroll employment, but it requires significant standardisation and de-duplication.
- Moreover, it should be recognised that a single data source is insufficient to understand formal employment and jobs in the country.
- Understanding and addressing issues of job creation or job quality cannot be achieved without a wide range of standardised, stable and publicly available labour statistics.

INDIAN ECONOMY

51st GST Council Meeting

- **In News-** The 51st meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council was recently held.
- **Background** - The previous (50th meeting) of GST Council
- The GST Council in the 50th meeting had deliberated on the Second Report of the Group of Ministers (GoM) on Casinos, Race Courses and Online Gaming.
- It had recommended that the actionable claims supplied in Casinos, Horse racing and Online gaming may be taxed at the rate of 28% on full face value, irrespective of whether the activities are a game of skill or chance.
- The Council had also recommended that the law may be amended to provide clarity in the matter.

About the 51st GST Council Meeting

- Accordingly, the GST Council in its 51st meeting recommended certain amendments in the CGST Act 2017 and IGST Act 2017, including amendment in Schedule III of CGST Act, 2017, to provide clarity on the taxation of supplies in casinos, horse racing and online gaming.
- The Council also recommended inserting a specific provision in IGST Act, 2017 to provide for liability to pay GST on the supply of online money gaming by a supplier located outside India to a person in India, for single registration in India for the said supplier through a simplified registration scheme and also for blocking of access by the public to any information generated, transmitted, received or hosted in any computer resource used for supply of online money gaming by such supplier in case of failure to comply with provisions of registration and payment of tax.
- The Council also recommended that valuation of supply of online gaming and actionable claims in casinos may be done based on the amount paid or payable to or deposited with the supplier, by or on behalf of the player.
- The Council recommended that CGST Rules, 2017 may be amended to insert specific provisions for valuation of supply of online gaming and supply of actionable claims in casinos accordingly.

Goods and Service Tax (GST)

About:

- Goods and Services Tax is an indirect tax used in India on the supply of goods and services.
- It is a value-added tax levied on most goods and services sold for domestic consumption.
- It was launched in India in 2017 as a comprehensive indirect tax for the entire country.
- It is a comprehensive, multistage, destination-based tax- Comprehensive because it has subsumed almost all the indirect taxes except a few state taxes.
- It is paid by the consumers and is remitted to the government by the businesses selling the goods and services.
- It is of three type i.e.
 - ✓ CGST to be levied by the Centre,
 - ✓ SGST to be levied by the States and
 - ✓ IGST a tax levied on all Inter-State supplies of goods and/or services.
- All these taxes are levied at rates mutually agreed upon by the Centre and the States.

Governance:

- The GST Council headed by the Union Finance Minister is the governing and key decision-making body for GST.

Significance of GST

- **Better Compliance:** GST helped in achieving better tax compliance by subsuming multiple taxation and reduction in taxation burden in the last four years.
- **Automated tax ecosystem:** It helped the country in transitioning to an automated indirect tax ecosystem. From electronic compliances, generation of e-invoices to tracking movement of goods through e-waybill - everything is now online
- **E-invoice & More Revenue:** The E-invoicing system helped reduce fake invoicing. Use of technology with online bill generation has resulted in smoother consignment movement and much fewer disputes with officials. After the introduction of E-invoice, GST collections have risen steadily since November 2020, surpassing the Rs. 1 lakh crore marks on several occasions.
- **Logistical efficiency, production cost cut:** Another major achievement of this regime is the fact that over 50% of logistics effort and time is saved since GST has ensured the removal of multiple checkpoints and permits at state border checkpoints.
- **Lesser transaction costs:** After the introduction of GST, there has been a significant reduction in transaction costs. This reduction has been a huge breakthrough in the interstate movement of products, allowing the country to boast of a single national unified market for businesses.
- **Cooperative Federalism:** The customs portals are linked with the GST portal for credit availing on imports constitution of the GST Council and ensuring Centre-State partnership in the decision-making process. It ensured cooperative federalism to be its major part.
- **Ease of doing business:** India's ease of doing business ranking has improved significantly in the last four years. Before GST was implemented, India's Ease of Doing Business ranking was 130 in 2016. In 2020, India was ranked 63rd on the list.

- **More Freedom:** Since the GST rate is the same across the country for a particular supply, traders and manufacturers in the organised sectors have gained more freedom to choose the best vendors, suppliers, and other stakeholders with better pricing, regardless of their location.
- **Improved Competitiveness:** GST has improved the competitiveness of domestic industries in the international market by removing hidden and embedded taxes.

Way ahead

- In India, it has been a remarkable achievement and a unique experiment in cooperative federalism.
- It helped the country in transitioning to an automated indirect tax ecosystem.
- GST gave a major boost to the 'Make in India' initiative of the Government of India by making goods and services produced in India competitive in the National as well as International market.

GST Council

- It is a Constitutional body under Article 279A, introduced by the Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016.
- It is empowered to modify, reconcile or to procure any law or regulation based on the context of GST in India.
- It is also considered as a federal body where both the centre and the states get due representation.

Functions: It makes recommendations to the Union and State Government on issues related to GST.

Composition

- Chairperson: Union Finance Minister.
- Members: Union State Minister of Revenue or Finance and Ministers in-charge of Finance or Taxation of all the States.
 - Every decision of the GST Council shall be taken at a meeting by a majority of not less than three-fourths of the weighted votes of the members present and voting, in accordance with the following principles, namely:
 - ✓ Vote of the Central Government shall have a weightage of one third of the total votes cast.
 - ✓ Votes of all the State Governments taken together shall have a weightage of two-thirds of the total votes cast, in that meeting.

PRELIMS FACT

1. PEHCHAN scheme

- **Context:** PEHCHAN scheme to provide new identity to handicraft artisans and help them avail benefits of various schemes

About the scheme:

- PEHCHAN scheme was launched in 2016 to provide new identity to handicraft artisans so that the benefits of various schemes are provided to the deserving artisans.
- Aadhar linked Pehchan Cards are issued after due verification.
- Pehchan card holders can avail the benefits of all the handicrafts schemes implemented by Ministry of Textiles.
- The ID card will enable the artisans to avail easy loans at a nominal rate.
- The ID cardholders will get the benefit of life insurance and Rs.1200 per year for their children studying between Class IX and Class XII.

Key features:

- ✚ **Baseline survey & Mobilization of Artisans Hastshilp Vikash Yojana:**
 - The Scheme aims to promote Indian handicraft by developing artisans clusters into professionally managed and self-reliant community enterprises on the principles of effective member participation and mutual corporation.
- ✚ **Design & Technology Up-gradation:**
 - The scheme aims to upgrade artisans skills through the development of invoice design and prototypes products for overseas markets, a revival of endangered crafts and preservation of heritage etc.
- ✚ **Human Resource Development:**
 - The scheme has been formulated to provide a qualified and trained workforce to the handicraft sector.
- ✚ **Direct Benefit to Artisans:**
 - The scheme envisages welfare measures like Health and Life Insurance, recognition, extending credit facilities, supply of modern tools and equipment to the artisans etc.
- ✚ **Infrastructure and Technology Support:**
 - The scheme aims to develop world-class infrastructure in the country to support handicraft production and enhance the product quality and cost to enable it to compete in the global market.
- ✚ **Research and Development:**
 - The scheme was introduced to conduct surveys and studies of important crafts and make an in-depth analysis of specific aspects and problems of Handicraft to generate useful inputs to aid policy planning and fine-tune the ongoing initiatives.
- ✚ **Marketing Support & Services:**
 - The scheme was introduced to promote and provide financial assistance to artisan

2. Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2023

- **Context:** The Rajya Sabha has passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2023 for making amendments to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.

Key details:

- The MMDR Act, 1957 was comprehensively amended in 2015 to bring several reforms in the mineral sector such as:
 - ✓ mandating method of auction for grant of mineral concessions to bring transparency in allocation of mineral resources,
 - ✓ for establishing District Mineral Foundation (DMF) for the welfare of the people and areas affected by mining and
 - ✓ for establishing National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) to give thrust to exploration and for ensuring stringent penalty for illegal mining.
- The Act was further amended in 2016 and 2020 and was last amended in 2021 to bring further reforms in the sector, such as:
 - ✓ removing the distinction between captive and merchant mines,
 - ✓ transfer of statutory clearances to ensure continuity in mining operations even with change of lessee,
 - ✓ removing the restrictions on transfer of mineral concessions,
 - ✓ lapsing of rights of non-auctioned concession holders which have not resulted in mining leases to ensure that concessions to private sector are only granted through auction etc.

The recent amendments:

Omission of minerals:

- Omission of 6 minerals from the list of 12 atomic minerals namely:
 - ✓ Lithium bearing minerals,
 - ✓ Titanium bearing minerals and ores,
 - ✓ Beryl and other beryllium bearing minerals,
 - ✓ Niobium and Tantalum bearing minerals and
 - ✓ Zirconium-bearing minerals.
- Upon removal of these minerals from the list of atomic minerals, exploration and mining of these minerals will be open to private sector.

Empowering Central Government to exclusively auction mineral concessions for certain critical mineral:

- Another major amendment passed by the Parliament is to empower the Central Government to exclusively auction mining lease and composite licence for certain critical minerals viz.
- Even though auction would be conducted by the Central Government, the mining lease or composite licence for these minerals to the successful bidders will be granted by the State Government only and the auction premium and other statutory payments shall continue to be received by the State Government.

Introducing exploration license for deep-seated and critical minerals:

- Even though 100% foreign direct investment (FDI) is allowed in mining and exploration sector through automatic route, currently there is no significant FDI received in these sectors.
- The Bill introduces provisions for grant of a new mineral concession, namely, Exploration License (EL), in the Act.
- The exploration licence granted through auction shall permit the license to undertake reconnaissance and prospecting operations for critical and deep-seated minerals mentioned in the newly proposed Seventh Schedule to the Act.

3. Ayush Visa

- **In News-**The Ministry of Home Affairs has notified the creation of a new category of Ayush (AY) visa for foreign nationals for treatment under Ayush systems/Indian systems of medicine.

About

- The introduction of the Ayush Visa category is part of India's roadmap for the Heal in India initiative.
- It will boost Medical Value Tourism in India and will strengthen the endeavor to accomplish vision for making Indian traditional medicine a global phenomenon.
- Medical Value Travel has seen significant growth in India in recent years. According to the report 'The Global Wellness Economy: Looking beyond COVID' by the Global Wellness Institute (GWI), the Global Wellness economy will grow at 9.9% annually.

AYUSH System of Medicine

- AYUSH is the acronym of the medical systems that are being practiced in India such as Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy.
- Fundamentally AYUSH provides an integrative healthcare modality for complete physical, mental, social, and spiritual health.

- In 2014, the Ministry of Ayush was formed by the Government of India with a vision of reviving the profound knowledge of traditional Indian systems of medicine.
- The WHO - Global Center for Traditional Medicine (WHO - GCTM), the first and only center of its kind is taking shape in Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- A special Ayush mark for Ayush products, development of a network of Ayush parks to encourage the promotion, research and manufacturing of Ayush products across the country.
- A significant step to achieve cooperation and facilitation of “One Herb, One Standard” was taken with the signing of MoU between the Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine and Homoeopathy (PCIM&H) and Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC).

4. e-CARe portal

In News- The e-CARe (e-Clearance for Afterlife Remains) portal was launched recently.

- The portal will have two provisions. One will be for bringing bodies from aboard, while other is to bring mortal remains. This portal will ensure seamless coordination and transparency in the entire procedure.

About the Portal

- The Central government will launch e-CARe (e-clearance for after life remains) portal to facilitate fast transfer of mortal remains of Indian nationals who die abroad.
- The portal will facilitate easy and swift transportation of the deceased Indians across international borders.
- The existing system has many barriers which cause delays. The purpose of a dedicated portal is to remove the barriers
- A nodal officer will review them in a time-bound manner and approve the application within 48 hours.

5. Voyager mission

- **Context:** Recently, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) lost communication with Earth’s longest-running space probe, Voyager 2.

About the mission:

- Launched around 46 years ago, Voyager 2 is the second spacecraft to enter interstellar space.
- Interstellar space is the region that lies outside the impact of our Sun’s constant flow of material and magnetic field.
- The first was Voyager 1, sent to space about two weeks after Voyager 2 (Voyager 1 was launched after Voyager 2).
- The two probes have explored all the outer giant planets of our solar system and discovered over 40 moons and numerous rings.

Features of the Voyager spacecraft

- Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 are identical spacecraft.
- Each of them is equipped with instruments to carry out 10 different experiments.

The instruments include:

- ✓ television cameras - to take images of planets and other celestial bodies
- ✓ infrared and ultraviolet sensors,
- ✓ magnetometers,
- ✓ plasma detectors, and
- ✓ Cosmic-ray and charged-particle sensors.
- As their mission involved going far away from the Sun, they aren’t powered by solar power, like other spacecraft are.
- Instead, Voyager relies on a small nuclear power plant, drawing hundreds of watts from the radioactive decay of a pellet of plutonium.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Explore and evaluate the impact of ‘Work from Home’ on family relationships. (10 Marks, 150 words)

Introduction:

- The rising wave of the COVID-19 outbreak in India and the subsequent lockdowns has forced the corporate world to opt for ‘work from home’, where in employees were allowed work remotely without coming to the office.

Impact of Work from Home on Family Relationship:

Positive Impacts

✦ On Relation with Children

- **Development of Strong bond:** It provides more time to spend with children and spending more time with little ones enhances the cooperation and understanding between parents and little ones.
- **Better Relationships with Elder Children:** Older children(above-12) generally need less constant supervision and care, so parent’s work roles aren’t as badly affected, allowing them to enjoy spending more time at home with the kids without it affecting work.
- **Increased sense of responsibility:** Parents who work from home can customize their day to meet their family’s needs.

- **Example:** School drop-off and pick-up are easier when you are not required to be in a physical workplace at a set time.
- ✚ **With Parents**
 - **More Time for Parents and Older People:** WFH provides more time for parents and elderly people to share traditional knowledge and experiences. Moreover, the children also get more time to take care of their parents.
 - **Joint families:** Reinforcement of the joint family as most families were back to their home.
- ✚ **With Partners**
 - **Biological Needs:** A new survey by Flex Jobs shows that 80% people think that having a flexible job would help them is more attentive to their significant other or partner.
 - **Gender Equality:** Shared domestic work may result in gender equality within the household.
- ✚ **Others**
 - **Balanced Life:** Often WFH allows one to be more flexible in terms of hours worked, allowing one to find a good balance between work role and marriage/family roles.
 - **Supportive Environment:** People with a healthy marriage will find the home a very supportive environment to work from, but poor marital quality may make working from home harder.

Negative Impacts

- ✚ **With partners and children**
 - **Disagreement with Partners and Children's:** According to Wellbeing report, among parents staying in work mode, 54% say that their work has led to arguments with their children while 57% say it has led to disagreements with their partners.
 - **Spillover effect:** When working from home, the work stress and family is at same place. As a result, it may lead to situation where husband vent out work stress on wife and children.
 - **Lack of Privacy:** Many children were on constant surveillance of their parents which deprived them of privacy which required counselor support.
- ✚ **In general with partners**
 - **Unnecessary Frustration:** Kids at home can demand attention, even if parents have someone to care for their kids while parents are at work.
 - **Stress in Relationship:** Example-Partner A, the remote worker, runs the errands, walks the dog during breaks, cooks meals, and picks up the kids, while partner B, who works at an office, doesn't deal with most or any of those chores. This could cause stress in a relationship and lead to conflict.
 - **Over Reliance of Spouse:** WFH can result in a smaller social network and less perceived social support since there are fewer natural opportunities to interact with others.
- ✚ **Connectivity Issues:** Individuals who work from home often find it hard to relax and switch off from work, since the home environment and workspace are the same. This can make it hard to relax and connect with your spouse when at home.
- ✚ **Women specific issues:** More responsibilities, more challenges: Working mothers don't just have professional responsibilities; they are also invested in care giving. The workload increases as they also have to devote time to help kids with homework results in quick frustration and fights with in the family.
- ✚ **Increased divorce rates:** An increased incidence of divorce was observed during the work from home phase.
- ✚ **Domestic violence:** The incidence of domestic abuse, both physical and emotional, increased (nearly 200% increase in reporting)
- ✚ **Others:** Some people become irritant due to background disturbance and lack of required work infrastructure.

Conclusion:

- Therefore, the governments are expected to make a regulatory framework to enable tele-working, and organizations should understand the implications of work from home during the crisis and ensure that they inadvertently do not miss critical compliances.

MCQs

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Consider the following statement about Ayush Visa.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government introduces a new category of Ayush visa for foreign nationals seeking treatment under the Indian systems of medicine. 2. This step is expected to boost medical tourism outside the country. 3. The Ayush-based healthcare & wellness economy is estimated to grow to \$70 billion by 2025. <p>How many of the above statements is/are correct.</p> <p>a) Only one b) Only two
c) Only three d) None</p> | <p>2. Consider the following statement about the PEHCHAN Scheme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skill & Training up gradation, design development workshops, tool kit distributions, marketing platforms, and infrastructural support. 2. Individual benefits to artisans like Mudra loans, Interest Subvention and Margin Money on Mudra loans. 3. Shilp Guru and National Awards to master artisans. 4. Monthly pension of Rs. 8,000 to awardee artisans under indigent circumstances. <p>How many of the above statements is/are correct.</p> |
|--|---|

- a) Only one b) Only two
c) Only three d) **Only four**
3. Consider the following statement about Impact of Climate Change upon the Indian Subcontinent.
1. The report was released by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) .
 2. India's average temperature has risen by around 0.7 deg. C during 1901-2018.
 3. The frequency and spatial extent of droughts over India increased significantly during 1951-2015.
 4. Sea-level rise in the North Indian Ocean occurred at a rate of 3.3 mm per year in the last two and half decades (1993-2017).
 5. The frequency of Severe Cyclonic Storms over the Bay of Bengal has increased during the post-monsoon seasons of 1998-2018.
- How many of the above statements is/are incorrect.
- a) **Only one** b) Only two
c) Only three d) Only five
4. Consider the following statement about Safe City Projects.
1. Safe City Project is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
 2. Safe City Projects have been approved by the Ministry of Home Affairs in Five cities initially: Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, and Hyderabad.
 3. Identification of hotspots for crime against women.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct.
- a) Only one b) **Only two**
c) Only three d) None
5. Voyager 2 is a space probe is recently seen in news, was launched by which of the following agency?
- a) **National Aeronautics and Space Administration.**
b) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency.
c) Russian Federal Space Agency.
d) Indian Space Research Organization.
6. Consider the following statement about Captive breeding of Himalayan Vulture.
1. The captive breeding was a joint project undertaken by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and the Assam forest department.
 2. India is home to 9 species of Vulture namely the Oriental white-backed, Long-billed, Slender-billed, Himalayan, Red-headed, Egyptian, Bearded, Cinereous and Eurasian Griffon.
 3. It is native to the Himalayas and the adjoining Tibetan Plateau and also found in the Central Asian mountains.
 4. The IUCN status of Himalayan vulture is Near Threatened
- How many of the above statements is/are correct.
- a) Only one b) Only two
c) Only three d) **Only four**
7. Consider the following statement about Rajmargyatra App.
1. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has launched a unified mobile application called as Rajmargyatra App.
 2. This app aims to provide comprehensive information and efficient complaint redressal for national highway users.
 3. Currently, it caters to the needs of users who are fluent in Hindi and English.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct.
- a) Only one b) Only two
c) **Only three** d) None
8. Consider the following statement about GST Council.
1. It is a Constitutional body under Article 279A, introduced by the Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016.
 2. It is empowered to modify, reconcile or to procure any law or regulation based on the context of GST in India.
 3. It is also considered as a federal body where both the centre and the states get due representation.
 4. It makes recommendations to the Union and State Government on issues related to GST.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct.
- a) Only one b) Only two
c) Only three d) **Only four**
9. Consider the following statement about "Meri Mati Mera Desh" campaign.
1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of "Meri Mati Mera Desh" campaign in run-up to Independence Day to honor the martyred bravehearts of the country.
 2. An Amrit Kalash Yatra will also be taken out and will reach Delhi, carrying the soil in 7,500 Kalash from villages and various corners of the country.
 3. An 'Amrit Vatika' will be built close to the National War Memorial from these 7,500 Kalash of soil and plants.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct.
- a) Only one b) Only two
c) **Only three** d) None
10. Consider the following statement about 'Port Health Organisation (PHO)'.
1. The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) launched Port Health Organisation (PHO) module under Sagar Setu to enable faster & simpler ecosystem to promote Ease of Doing Business
 2. Its work is to conduct disease surveillance, health inspection, and quarantine measures to safeguard citizens and port workers.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- a) Only 1 b) Only 2
c) **Both 1 and 2** d) None of these