

VEDHIK
DAJLY NEWS
ANALYSIS

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FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.

It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.

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China defends construction, says it is within its sovereignty

India has said a bridge it is building is in an area under illegal occupation

ANANTH KRISHNAN
HONG KONG

A day after New Delhi said a bridge being constructed by China across Pangong Lake in Eastern Ladakh was in an area under “illegal” occupation for six decades, Beijing said its infrastructure “falls within its sovereignty”.

The bridge under construction connects the north and south banks of Pangong Lake, and officials said it would bolster Chinese capabilities to move troops and equipment between its garrisons on the two sides. The construction, officials said, was around 25 km on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

“This bridge is being constructed in areas that have been under the illegal occupation by China for around



According to officials, the bridge under construction across Pangong Lake would bolster Chinese capabilities. ■ FILE PHOTO

60 years now,” Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said on Thursday, adding that New Delhi was “monitoring this activity closely”. India sees China as occupying at least

38,000 sq km in Aksai Chin.

“India has never accepted such illegal occupation,” he said. “Separately, government has been taking all necessary steps to ensure that our security interests are ful-

ly protected. As part of these efforts, government has also, during the last seven years, increased significantly the budget for development of border infrastructure and completed more roads and bridges than ever before.”

Asked about India’s comment on China’s “illegal occupation” at a daily press briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said he was “not aware of the situation”, but defended the construction. “I want to stress that China’s infrastructure construction on its territory entirely falls within its sovereignty,” he said, “and is aimed at safeguarding China’s territorial sovereignty and security as well as peace and stability in the China-India border area.”

'India to surpass Japan as Asia's 2nd largest economy by 2030'

IHS Markit sees consumption spending doubling over a decade to \$3 tn by 2030

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India is likely to overtake Japan as Asia's second-largest economy by 2030 when its GDP is also projected to surpass that of Germany and the U.K. to rank as the world's No.3, IHS Markit said in a report on Friday.

Currently, India is the sixth-largest economy, behind the U.S., China, Japan, Germany and the U.K.

"India's nominal GDP... is forecast to rise from \$2.7 trillion in 2021 to \$8.4 trillion by 2030," IHS Markit said. "This rapid pace of economic expansion would result in the size of Indian GDP exceeding Japanese GDP by 2030, making India the second-largest economy in the Asia-Pacific



Global growth engine: 'India's nominal GDP is forecast to rise from \$2.7 trillion in 2021 to \$8.4 trillion by 2030'. ■ AFP

region." By 2030, the Indian economy would also be larger in size than the largest Western European economies of Germany, France and the U.K.

The long-term outlook for the Indian economy is sup-

ported by a number of key growth drivers.

"An important positive factor for India is its large and fast-growing middle class, which is helping to drive consumer spending," IHS Markit said, forecasting

that the country's consumption expenditure will double from \$1.5 trillion in 2020 to \$3 trillion by 2030.

For the full fiscal year 2021-22, India's real GDP growth rate is projected to be 8.2%, rebounding from the severe contraction of 7.3% year-on-year in 2020-21, IHS Markit said.

The Indian economy is forecast to continue growing strongly in the 2022-23 fiscal year, at a pace of 6.7%.

The rapidly growing consumer market as well as its large industrial sector have made India an increasingly important investment destination for multinationals in many sectors, including manufacturing, infrastructure and services.

Japan, U.S. expand defence cooperation

Amid tensions with China, Tokyo agrees to continue hosting 50,000 U.S. troops

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Japan moved ahead with an expansion of support to U.S. troops as the allies held top-level talks on Friday over tensions with China and North Korea.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced the two nations were signing a five-year extension of the support package provided by Japan for the hosting of around 50,000 U.S. troops on its soil.

The new agreement “will invest greater resources to deepen our military readiness and interoperability”, Mr. Blinken said at the opening of four-way virtual talks between the allies’ foreign and defence chiefs.



Antony Blinken

“Our allies must not only strengthen the tools we have but also develop new ones,” Mr. Blinken said on Thursday in Washington.

Tokyo pays the costs of the U.S. forces in the country as well as utilities. A previous agreement was set to expire

in March 2021, but was extended for a year around a change of administration in Washington.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, appearing from isolation after a mild case of COVID-19, said the allies were “evolving our roles and missions to reflect Japan’s growing ability to contribute to regional peace and stability”.

Japan renounced its right to wage war after the Second World War and has since developed a close alliance with Washington, which is treaty-bound to defend the world’s third-largest economy.

According to the Foreign Ministry, the new five-year package will amount to 211 billion yen (\$1.8 billion) per

fiscal year, an increase of about 5%.

The package comes amid growing tensions with China, which has stepped up incursions near the self-ruling democracy Taiwan.

“Beijing’s provocative actions keep raising tensions across the Taiwan Strait and in the East and South China Sea,” Mr. Blinken said.

He also described North Korea’s missile programmes as an “ongoing threat” after Pyongyang fired a suspected ballistic missile into the sea.

A joint statement issued after the talks took aim at “efforts by China to undermine the rules-based order”, with specific reference to activity in the East and South China Seas.

Awaiting law panel report on Uniform Civil Code: Centre

It said different laws an affront to unity

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

“Citizens belonging to different religious and denominations follow different property and matrimonial laws which are an affront to the nation’s unity,” the Centre has informed the Delhi High Court while responding to a plea seeking direction to the government to draft a Uniform Civil Code.

The Centre also said it was awaiting the report of the Law Commission of India, which is examining various issues relating to the Uniform Civil Code.

The affidavit of the Ministry of Law and Justice came in response to a petition filed by BJP leader Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, who has contended that the government has “failed” to put in place a Uniform Civil Code, as provided under Article 44 of the Constitution.

“The expression ‘Uniform Civil Code’ denotes the field of personal law relating to marriage, divorce, maintenance, custody and guardianship of children, inheritance and succession and adoption,” the Ministry said.

It said that Article 44 of the Constitution creates an obligation upon the State to endeavour to secure for citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the country. The Ministry said the purpose behind Article 44 is to strengthen the object of “Secular Democratic Republic” as enshrined in the Preamble of



the Constitution.

“This provision is provided to effect integration of India by bringing communities on the common platform on matters which are at present governed by diverse personal laws,” the Ministry said adding, “Article 44 divests religion from social relations and personal law”.

The Ministry said, “as and when the report of Law Commission in the matter is received, the government would examine the same in consultation with the various stakeholders involved in the matter”.

‘Power with Parliament’

Responding to the plea which has sought a direction against the Union of India to draft a Uniform Civil Code in spirit of Article 44 of the Constitution within three months, the Ministry said it was against the Constitutional scheme. It reiterated that only the “Parliament exercises sovereign power to enact laws and no outside power or authority can issue a direction to enact a particular piece of legislation”.

Begin NEET counselling under present quota: SC

The judge continued, “prospectively, and for the future, we will hear the petitions finally on the EWS criteria in the third week of March and rule on that. The ruling will then apply prospectively and for the future”.

Pronouncing the operative directions in the interim order, the court noted the “urgent need to commence the process of NEET counselling” for 2021-2022.

Firstly, the court agreed with the government and the Pandey committee that the EWS criteria as stipulated in January 2019 need to be used for the NEET admissions this year so that the entire exercise is not derailed. “Counselling for NEET PG 2021 and NEET UG 2021 shall be conducted by giving effect to the reservation provided by the notification of July 29, 2021, including 27% reservation for OBC and 10% reservation for EWS category for the AIQ seats,” it ordered.

Secondly, it directed that the “criteria for the determination of the EWS, as notified by January 2019 official memorandum, shall be used for identifying the EWS category for candidates who appeared for NEET PG and NEET UG examinations in 2021”.

Thirdly, it said any further and prospective recommendations made by the Pandey committee, modifying the criteria in the January 2019 memorandum, would be subject to the final result of the adjudication of the case in court.

The case concerns petitions filed by doctors in August 2021 against the July 29, 2021 notification issued by the Directorate General of Health Services of the Ministry of Health implementing 27% and 10% reservation for the OBC and EWS categories respectively while filling 15% undergraduate and 50% postgraduate AIQ seats under NEET.

NSO estimates FY22 GDP growth at 9.2%

COVID-19 could impact final numbers

FCRA registration restored for Missionaries of Charity

According to the 2020-21 annual financial returns filed by the Kolkata registered NGO on December 13, the total balance in its foreign contribution bank account stood at ₹103.76 crore.

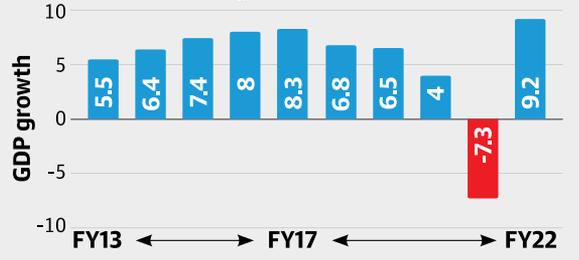
It has more than 250 bank accounts across the

country to utilise the foreign funds.

The Ministry had asserted that NGOs whose request for renewal was turned down will not be eligible to either receive or utilise the foreign contribution in their designated bank accounts.

Signalling a rebound

The first advance estimates showed that India's GDP may grow at 9.2% in FY22. The assessment is based on data for the first eight months of FY22



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow by 9.2% in the current financial year following last fiscal's 7.3% contraction, the National Statistical Office (NSO) said in its first advance estimates of economic output released on Friday, amid concerns over the likely impact of a third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NSO, however, made clear that these were "early projections" that did not factor in actual performance of various indicators as well as measures that may be taken to contain the spread of the pandemic.

"GDP at constant prices (2011-12) in the year 2021-22 is estimated at ₹147.54 lakh crore, as against the provisional estimate of GDP for the year 2020-21 of ₹135.13 lakh crore," the NSO said, adding that growth in real

GDP is pegged at 9.2%. "Real GVA at Basic Prices is estimated at ₹135.22 lakh crore in 2021-22, as against ₹124.53 lakh crore in 2020-21, showing a growth of 8.6%," it added.

"The implicit GDP growth of 5.6% for H2 FY2022 built in by the NSO may not fully factor in the admittedly evolving impact of Omicron," said Aditi Nayar, chief economist at ICRA Ltd. "Our sense is that after a 6.0-6.5% rise in Q3 FY2022, the GDP expansion is set to slip below 5% in the ongoing quarter," she added.

The NSO's GVA estimates show the mining sector outpacing others with growth of 14.3% following last year's 8.5% contraction, followed by manufacturing which is seen expanding by 12.5% after shrinking 7.2% in the previous 12-month period.

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NSO estimates FY22 GDP growth at 9.2%

Agriculture sector is estimated to grow at 3.9% in FY22 (3.6%). The electricity, water supply and other utility services category is estimated to grow at 8.5% (1.9%), while construction is expected to grow 10.7% (-8.6%) and trade, hotels, transport, communication and broadcasting services are projected to grow at 11.9% against a sharp contraction of 18.2% last year.

“Compared to the pre-COVID performance of FY2020, the advance estimates project an anaemic rise of 1.3% and 1.9%, respectively, for GDP and GVA in FY2022,” Ms. Nayar said.

“Most conspicuous amongst the disaggregated data is the weak performance of private final consumption expenditure and trade, hotel, transport,

communication etc., which are pegged to trail their FY2020 levels by 2.9% and a considerable 8.5%, respectively, underscoring the lingering impact of COVID-19 on the Indian economy,” she added.

“These estimates have utilised available information up to the months ranging from September to December 2021,” said D.K. Srivastava, chief policy advisor, EY India.

“As such, the likely adverse impact of COVID’s third wave on the economy may not have been fully incorporated in these estimates. It is possible that another 20 basis points of growth may be shaved off from 2021-22 growth by the time the second advance estimates become available,” he added.

Sustainable farming creates new livelihood sources

Gehlot's economic advisory team studies model in Banswara for replication

MOHAMMED IQBAL

JAIPUR

A sustainable natural farming system adopted in southern Rajasthan's Banswara district, which has created new livelihood sources and brought food security to indigenous tribal communities, has impressed the Chief Minister's Economic Transformation Advisory Council. The model is being considered for replication elsewhere in the State.

A 20-member team of the Council visited Banswara district's Amlipara village earlier this week to study the



Members of the Economic Transformation Advisory Council visiting Amlipara village. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

techniques and innovations which have enabled the farmers to meet their daily food necessities by growing fruits and vegetables at a low cost. The integrated system has also reduced the tribals'

dependence on market and improved nutritional status of the local population.

The team members, drawn mostly from the State government's Agriculture and Horticulture Depart-

ments, interacted with the farmers to understand their vision as well as the issues being faced by them. They especially evinced interest in the functioning of the community-managed seed system, which has facilitated diversification of crops.

The model entails adoption of organic farming, manure, medicines and pesticides and establishment of vermicompost units at agricultural fields. The locally prepared organic manure is used for growing maize, wheat, urad and other crops.

The baton of forest restoration in the net zero race

For carbon sequestration, India must revisit its policy framework and reverse fading participation of local communities



MOHAN CHANDRA PARGAIEN

India's pledge to set a net zero target by 2070, at the COP26 summit, Glasgow, has again highlighted the importance of forests as an undisputed mechanism to help mitigate the challenges of climate change. Though, in more specific terms, this was already highlighted during the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) framework (2013) of REDD+ for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, along with the 'sustainable management of forests for the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks'. In a study by Grisco (2017), land-based sinks (natural climate solutions which also include forests) can provide up to 37% of emission reduction and help in keeping the global temperature below 2° C. Further, recent research has favoured a natural regeneration model of restoration over the existing much-hyped mode of tree planting as such forests are said to secure nearly 32% carbon storage, as per one report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Continued degradation

Though India is said to have increased its forest cover by 15,000 square kilometres in the last six years, the degradation of existing forests continues. As per the State of Forests Report (1989), the coun-

try had 2,57,409 sq.km (7.83% of its geographical area) under the open forest category, having a density of 10% to less than 40%. However, in 30 years (2019) this has been increased to 3,04,499 sq.km (9.26%). This means every year on average, nearly 1.57 lakh hectare of forests was degraded. This degradation highlights the presence of anthropogenic pressures including encroachment, grazing, fire, which our forests are subjected to. Having diverted nearly 1.5 million hectares of forests since 1980 for developmental activities and losing nearly 1.48 million hectares of forests to encroachers coupled with an intricate link between poverty and unemployment, India is witnessing enormous degradation of forests and deforestation. This warrants the participation of people as an essential and effective route to achieve the desired target of carbon sequestration through the restoration of forests.

Terms of engagement

In a historic departure from pursuing commercial objectives to supporting the needs of people in a participatory manner (as envisaged in National Forest Policy, 1988), India made its attempt, in 1990, to engage local communities in a partnership mode while protecting and managing forests and restoring wastelands with the concept of care and share. This concept of joint forest management spelt much hope for States and forest-fringe communities. Later, the concept of forest development agencies was introduced to consolidate the efforts in an autonomous model, which paved the way for fund flow from various other

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO



sources to joint forest management committees. The efforts to make this participatory approach operative resulted in the formation of nearly 1.18 lakh joint forest management committees managing over 25 million hectares of forest area. Most of these became active and operative while implementing various projects financed by external agencies such as the World Bank, the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) Japan, the Department for International Development (DFID) United Kingdom and the European Union (EU). The similar system of joint management in the case of national parks, sanctuaries and tiger reserves which existed in the name of eco-development committees initially proved effective as it could garner the support of these participating communities not only for the protection and development of biodiversity but also in the considerable reduction in man-animal conflicts and the protection of forests from fires and grazing.

However, the completion of the project period and lack of subsequent funding affected their functionality and also the protection of forests due to a lack of support from participating local communi-

ties including associated non-governmental organisations.

Except for the National Mission for Green India, in all other centrally sponsored programmes such as Project Tiger, fire management, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH) including the Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), the lack of priority and policy support to ensure the participation of local communities via the institutions of joint forest management committees slowly made their participation customary. This caused a gradual decline in their effectiveness.

Changed role now

The role of local institutions of gram panchayat or joint forest management committees is now restricted to be a consultative institution instead of being partners in planning and implementation. This indifference and alienation from the participatory planning and implementation of various schemes further affects the harmony between Forest Departments and communities, endangering the protection of forests. This is more relevant while taking up restoration activities including tree planting outside the designated forest areas where motivation and encouragement of stakeholders (especially panchayats and urban local bodies) are crucial.

As committed at Glasgow, India will have to 'focus much more on climate change and devise strategies and programmes to achieve the net zero target'. Besides reducing the quantum of emissions in a phased manner – itself full of challenges – the approaches for carbon storage and offsetting through

natural sinks such as forests need to be given equal priority.

Replicate Telangana model

To achieve net zero targets there is a need to revisit our existing legal and policy mechanisms, incentivise the local communities appropriately and ensure fund flow for restoration interventions, duly providing for the adequate participation of local people in planning and implementation through local institutions. Political priority and appropriate policy interventions (as done recently in Telangana by amending the panchayat and municipal acts for environmental concerns and creating a provision for a Green Fund, or Telangana Haritha Nidhi, for tree planting and related activities) need replication in other States. These should be supported by enabling financial and institutional support mechanisms and negotiations with stakeholders to incentivise local communities to boost efforts to conserve and develop forest resources. Though India did not become a signatory of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use, the considerations of land tenure and the forest rights of participatory communities with accelerated finances will help aid steps in the race toward net zero. This inclusive approach with political prioritisation will not only help reduce emissions but also help to conserve and increase 'our forest cover' to 'a third of our total area'. It will also protect our once rich and precious biological diversity.

Mohan Chandra Pargaian is Senior IFS officer, Hyderabad, Telangana. The views expressed are personal

General Studies Paper I	
A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawal of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies
General Studies Paper II	
A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these;
I	Structure, organization and functioning of the executive and the judiciary, Ministries and Departments;

J	Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions;
K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
General Studies Paper III	
A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
C	Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
D	Infrastructure Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc. Government budgeting;
E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
L	Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology;
M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
N	Developments and their applications and effects in everyday life;
O	Issues relating to intellectual property rights
P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;

T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;
V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
General Studies Paper IV	
A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
J	Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.
K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.