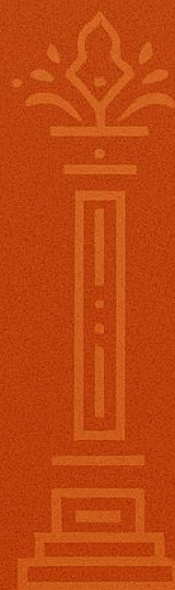


Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India



TOPIC-6-Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.

Section 1: Indian Society – A Civilizational Continuum

“India is not just a country—it is a civilization that breathes through its people, customs, and contradictions.”

The Indian society is not a static social order, but a living civilization that has grown through centuries of interaction, adaptation, and transformation. From the **Indus Valley urbanism** to the **post-modern democratic ethos**, Indian society is shaped by enduring values of **community, tradition, spirituality, and coexistence**. Unlike many modern societies built on recent contracts or revolutions, Indian society is a **layered structure**, deeply embedded in the **philosophical and moral systems** that originated thousands of years ago and continue to guide its evolution today.

I. Concept of Indian Society: Meaning and Scope

Indian society refers to the complex system of **interactions, institutions, beliefs, and relationships** that define social life across the Indian subcontinent. It encompasses **cultural pluralism, social hierarchy, group solidarity, and functional diversity**. The society is influenced by ancient Hindu philosophical texts, Buddhist reforms, Islamic traditions, colonial restructuring, and post-independence constitutionalism.



Key Concepts:

- **Society** (derived from Latin *societas*): A web of relationships governed by norms.
- **Indian Society**: A multilevel social structure shaped by **religion, kinship, caste, ethnicity, and region**.
- **Civilizational Society**: India's social order reflects both continuity and change—where ancient traditions coexist with modern institutions.

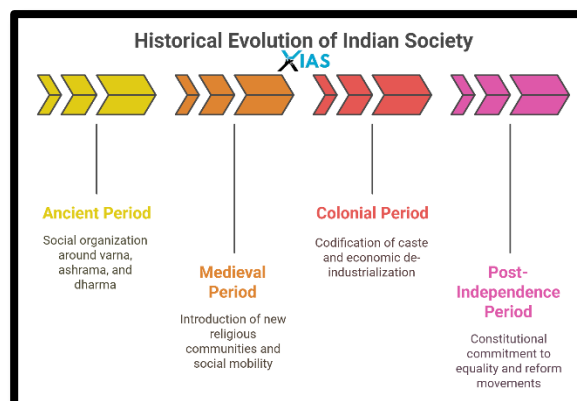
II. Core Foundations of Indian Society

Indian society is fundamentally:

- **Traditional yet Transforming**: While rooted in customs and rituals, it adapts to changing values (e.g., rising female literacy, decline in joint families).
- **Kinship-based**: Relationships are defined not only by individuals but by families, clans (*gotras*), and castes (*jatis*).
- **Hierarchical**: Social positions are stratified historically through the **varna-jati system**, now interacting with modern class and occupational hierarchies.
- **Value-Centric**: Dominated by concepts like **Dharma** (duty), **Karma** (action), **Seva** (service), and **Nyaya** (justice).
- **Collectivist**: Community and group decisions often take precedence over individual autonomy.

III. Historical Evolution of Indian Society

- **Ancient Period**: Social organization around varna, ashrama (stages of life), and dharma. Strong emphasis on family, rituals, and caste purity.
- **Medieval Period**: Introduction of new religious communities and social mobility.
- **Colonial Period**: Codification of caste and economic de-industrialization.
- **Post-Independence Period**: Constitutional commitment to equality and reform movements.



guilds, and social mobility through service and conversions.

- **Colonial Period:** Codification of caste, census-based classification, economic de-industrialization, rise of modern professions and education.
- **Post-Independence Period:** Constitutional commitment to equality, abolition of untouchability (Article 17), rise of democratic institutions, and reform movements.

IV. Key Social Institutions in Indian Society

Institution	Function in Society
Family	Primary unit of emotional, social, and economic support; predominantly patriarchal.
Caste System	Traditionally organized labour, marriage, and social norms; continues to influence electoral politics and social mobility.
Marriage and Kinship	Define lineage, inheritance, and social alliances; both patrilineal and matrilineal patterns exist.
Religion	Organizes moral behaviour, rituals, festivals, and identity; promotes community life and charity.
Panchayati Raj Institutions	Provide grassroots democracy in rural areas; blend traditional authority with constitutional mechanisms.

V. Real-World Reflections (2024–25 Official Examples)

- **Kerala:** Retains matrilineal heritage in some communities, like Nairs, even as urbanization rises.
- **Jharkhand:** Tribal kinship and customary councils continue to govern family life in Pahariya and Munda groups.
- **Rajasthan:** Caste councils (*khap panchayats*) play informal roles in marital and property disputes despite Supreme Court restrictions.
- **Delhi NCR:** Growth of urban nuclear families, but family elders retain symbolic authority in decision-making.



VI. Challenges to the Traditional Structure

1. Erosion of Joint Family System

- Urban migration, housing constraints, and work mobility lead to nuclearization.
- Example: 2024 Census pilot survey shows <35% families in urban India live in joint households.

2. Persistence of Caste Discrimination

- Continued practice of **untouchability** in rural belts of Bihar, MP, and Tamil Nadu.
- NCRB (2023–24): Over 57,000 cases of caste-based atrocities registered.

3. Gender Bias and Patriarchy

- Declining **female labour force participation** (25.4%, PLFS 2024), wage gap, and domestic violence prevalence.
- Cultural preference for sons persists in rural Rajasthan and UP (NFHS-5 and MoWCD reports).

4. Generational Conflict in Urban Areas

- Value mismatch between youth exposed to liberal global values and parents rooted in tradition.

VII. Suggestions and Reforms

- **Constitutional Literacy:** School-level civic education on equality and rights.
- **Panchayat Reforms:** More gender and caste inclusion at grassroots.
- **Family Counselling Programs:** Promote mutual respect and harmony in urban joint families (e.g., Delhi Legal Services Authority's 2024 model).
- **Best Practice:** *Kerala Kudumbashree Mission*—empowers women and challenges patriarchal norms while preserving collectivism.
- **Committee Recommendation:** **National Integration Council (2024)** suggested culture-based curriculum reforms to promote social empathy and constitutional values.

Conclusion:

“Indian society is not a puzzle to be solved, but a wisdom to be preserved with adaptation.”

The civilizational nature of Indian society is its deepest strength. By nurturing institutions like family, religion, and kinship alongside modern structures of governance, India walks a unique path where **the old and the new are not in conflict but in conversation**. As it continues to modernize, Indian society must ensure that **its diversity, resilience, and rootedness** remain its guiding light.

Models of Society and Indian vs Western Social Framework

“A society grows great when its people plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.”

– Greek Proverb

India's complex social fabric has evolved through centuries of philosophical inquiry, religious diversity, and civilisational continuity. To understand how societies function and evolve, sociologists have proposed various **models of society**. These models offer conceptual tools to compare Indian society with that of the West, helping us understand structures, values, and transitions in both.

I. Conceptual Models of Society –

1. The Mosaic Model

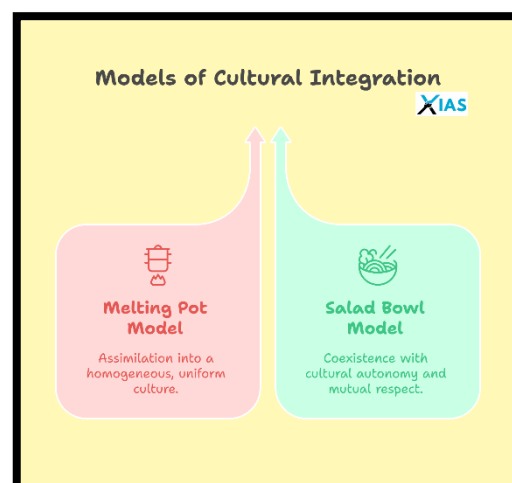
- Society is visualised as a **mosaic of distinct cultural, linguistic, or ethnic communities**, each maintaining its unique identity.
- Promotes **unity in diversity** without forced assimilation.
- **Indian society** exemplifies this model: multiple religions, castes, tribes, and languages coexist.
- **Example:** The constitutional recognition of 22 scheduled languages (Eighth Schedule), yet all function under one democratic framework.

2. The Melting Pot Model

- A model dominant in early American thought where diverse cultures **assimilate into a single, homogeneous culture**, losing individual distinctiveness.
- Often criticised for eroding minority identities in pursuit of uniformity.
- **Not applicable to India**, as its pluralism resists such assimilation.

3. The Salad Bowl Model

- Emphasises **coexistence without merging**—just like ingredients in a salad retain their flavour while contributing to the whole.
- Promotes **cultural autonomy with mutual respect**.
- India's **federal and multicultural ethos** resonates with this idea, especially in states with strong regional identities like Tamil Nadu or Nagaland.



4. Syncretic Model

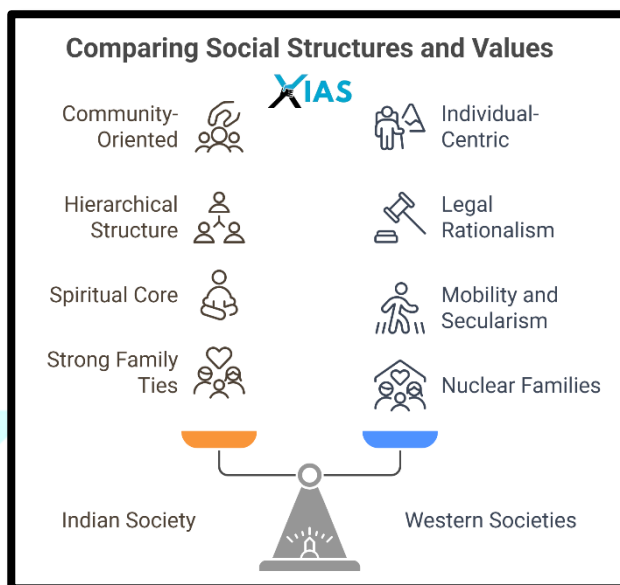
- Cultures and values intermingle over time to create **new, hybrid practices**.
- India's **Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb** or Sufi-Bhakti traditions reflect such **cultural fusion**.
- Relevant for understanding urban and historical cultural synthesis in India.

5. Pluralist Model

- A society where multiple groups have equal access to power, resources, and recognition.
- **India's democratic institutions**, secularism, and affirmative action policies are institutional forms of pluralism.

II. Indian Society – Structural Identity

- **Community-Oriented:** Emphasis on kinship, caste, religion, and region.
- **Hierarchy:** Caste and patriarchy influence roles and mobility.
- **Spiritual Core:** Religion often shapes occupations, values, and rituals.
- **Resilience through Diversity:** From tribes in the Northeast to urban cosmopolitans, the society adapts without uniformity.
- **Institutional Pluralism:** Coexistence of traditional panchayats and constitutional governance (Panchayati Raj Institutions).



III. Western Societies – Structural Traits

- **Individual-Centric:** Identity based on personal achievement, not birth.
- **Legal Rationalism:** Law and state define rights, not community norms.
- **Mobility and Secularism:** Greater occupational and geographical mobility; secular institutions dominate public life.
- **Nuclear Families and Social Contracts:** Family and social ties are voluntary and contract-based rather than hereditary.

IV. Contemporary Reflections: Hybridisation and Tension

- India is transitioning from a **traditional pluralist model** to a **modern hybrid society**.
- Urban youth increasingly adopt Western ideals (e.g., individualism, nuclear living) but within Indian familial norms.
- Globalisation and technology have accelerated this transition.
- Government programs like **Digital India**, **Startup India**, and **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao** reflect a balancing act between Western efficiency and Indian social realities.

V. Challenges in Harmonising Models

- **Social Stratification:** Caste remains a limiting factor in mobility despite legal safeguards.
- **Cultural Conflicts:** Tension between liberal rights and traditional norms (e.g., same-sex marriage debates).
- **Urban Anomie:** Rapid Westernisation without supportive social networks has led to alienation and stress.

- **Moral Policing vs Expression:** Conflicts over freedom of dress, interfaith marriage reflect value clashes.

VI. Comparative Overview: Indian vs Western Society

Feature	Indian Society	Western Society
Identity	Collective (caste, religion, region)	Individual-based
Social Organisation	Hierarchical and status-bound	Egalitarian, class-based
Family Structure	Joint and extended families dominant	Predominantly nuclear families
Social Change	Gradual and value-laden	Rapid, led by economy and innovation
Religion	Public and community-oriented	Private and individualistic
Gender Role	Patriarchal, slowly changing	Legally egalitarian, more gender-equal
State-Society Relationship	Embedded within social customs (e.g., khap panchayats)	Defined through laws, rights, and accountability

VII. Suggestions and Best Practices

- **Promote constitutional morality** (as highlighted in Sabarimala and Navtej Singh Johar judgments).
- Strengthen **community-based development models** like Kudumbashree (Kerala), which balance local values with modern empowerment.
- Encourage **value-based education** integrating global citizenship with Indian ethics.
- Adopt **inclusive federalism** to accommodate regional diversities (14th Finance Commission, NITI Aayog recommendations).

Conclusion: India's Unique Social Grammar

India cannot be boxed into a single Western or Eastern social model. It is neither a melting pot nor a salad bowl entirely—but a **living mosaic** with flowing pieces that form an ever-evolving picture. Its strength lies in **cultural negotiation, not cultural surrender**. As India navigates the 21st century, its societal model must be one that cherishes diversity while ensuring justice, dignity, and equity for all.

Section 2: Salient Features of Indian Society

"India is a thali, not a melting pot—each element retains its taste, yet blends in harmony."

—Shashi Tharoor

India's social fabric is unique in the world—not because it is uniform, but because it thrives on complexity. The **salient features** of Indian society are drawn from a deep civilizational ethos that allows for **coexistence of opposites**: modernity with tradition, spiritualism with materialism, caste rigidity with class mobility, and

collective identity with individual aspiration. These features are not just social characteristics—they are **mechanisms of continuity**, essential to India’s pluralist democratic structure.

I. Unity in Diversity

India’s most celebrated feature is its **unity amidst extensive diversity**—geographical, cultural, linguistic, and religious. Despite this, the **Indian identity** remains rooted in constitutional values and shared historical experiences.

- Example: *All-India Services* and *Parliament* reflect national unity despite regional diversities.
- The Indian national movement brought together Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Dalits, women, and tribals—demonstrating functional unity despite differences.



II. Predominance of Family as a Social Unit

Indian society is **family-oriented**, where the **joint or extended family** has traditionally acted as the basic economic, emotional, and cultural unit.

- Decision-making is collective.
- Elders wield authority and maintain intergenerational knowledge.
- Urbanisation is leading to a rise in nuclear families but **emotional and financial interdependence** remains.

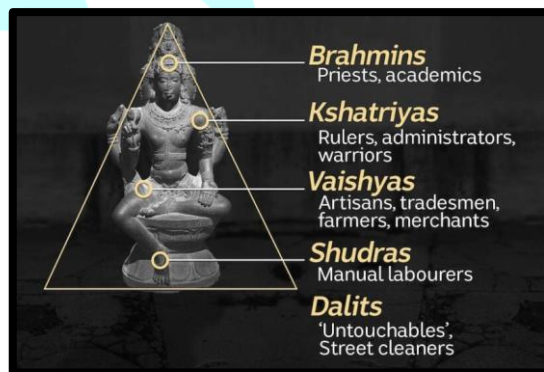
Example: The 2024–25 PLFS (Periodic Labour Force Survey) shows that nearly **68% of rural households** still operate under joint or extended family setups.

Family Structure in India		
Characteristic	Joint Family	Nuclear Family
Decision-Making	Collective	Individual
Authority	Elders	Parents
Interdependence	High	Moderate
Prevalence (Rural)	68%	Lower

III. Caste System and Social Stratification

The **caste system (jati-varna hierarchy)** is an enduring structure that organizes social relationships and access to power/resources. While the **Constitution (Articles 15 and 17)** has outlawed caste-based discrimination, its shadow remains in electoral politics, marriage, and rural economic relations.

- **Vertical Stratification:** Brahmin > Kshatriya > Vaishya > Shudra (varna model)
- **Horizontal Identity:** 4000+ jatis with regional variation
- **Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs)** protected by affirmative action (Article 341, 342)

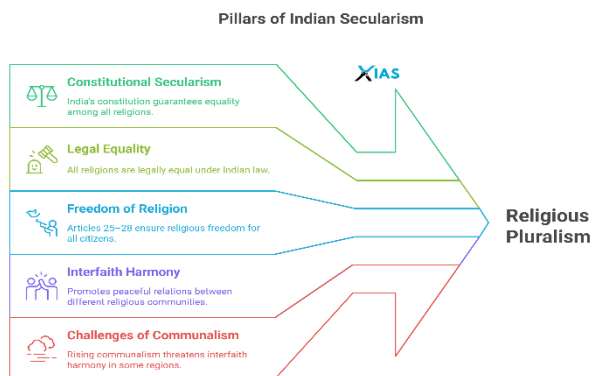


Example: Bihar and UP continue to exhibit caste-based voting patterns, as observed in the 2024 General Elections.

IV. Religious Pluralism

India is constitutionally secular, with **legal equality among all religions**. Religious pluralism allows the peaceful coexistence of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, and other indigenous traditions.

Article 25–28 ensure freedom of religion.



- Interfaith harmony remains a pillar of Indian secularism but is challenged by rising communalism in certain areas.

Case Study (2024): The *Harmony Walks initiative* by Maharashtra Police brought together communities in Aurangabad district after communal tension, restoring trust via interfaith dialogue.

V. Linguistic and Cultural Pluralism

India has **22 scheduled languages (8th Schedule)** and 122 major spoken languages, along with over **2000 dialects**.

- Multilingualism is common; most Indians speak more than one language at home and school.
- Linguistic identity plays a role in **state formation** (e.g., Telangana in 2014) and **regional assertion** (e.g., Tamil identity movement).



2024 Census Note: Hindi is the most spoken language (43%), followed by Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, and Tamil.

VI. Coexistence of Tradition and Modernity

Indian society reflects a **continuum**, not a rupture, between the traditional and the modern.

- Rituals like marriage still follow customary norms (e.g., arranged marriage), but choices are increasingly individualistic.
- Women's roles are expanding in public spaces while also retaining domestic responsibilities.
- Cultural practices like yoga and Ayurveda gain global modern traction while being ancient.

Example: Urban women working in IT in Bangalore celebrate Karwa Chauth while managing MNC portfolios—blending tradition and modernity.

VII. Tolerance and Syncretism

Indian society's tolerance is embedded in **Bhakti, Sufi, and Gandhian traditions**. Even today, **Sufi dargahs, Christian churches, Buddhist monasteries**, and Hindu temples coexist within walking distance in many towns.

Example: **Haji Ali Dargah** in Mumbai attracts visitors from all faiths.

Best Practice: The "*School of Pluralism*" program by NCERT (2024) integrates teachings of different religions to promote mutual respect and social peace in high schools.

VIII. Role of Women and Gender Norms

While historically patriarchal, Indian society is undergoing a **gender shift**:

- Women now participate in panchayats (33% reservation).
- Legal protections under **Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017**, and **POSH Act, 2013** are gradually improving public space safety.

Example: Bihar's **Mukhyamantri Udyami Yojana (2024–25)** offers capital assistance to women entrepreneurs from SC/ST/OBC communities.



IX. Regional Variations in Social Norms

- North India: Patriarchal, dowry, joint families
- South India: Matrilineal practices in Kerala, early widow remarriage in Tamil Nadu
- North-East: Strong tribal identity, women's mobility, clan-based society

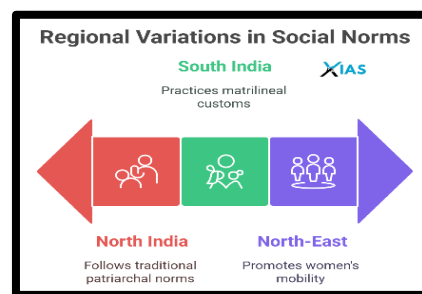
This diversity enriches the **social laboratory** of India.

X. Constitutional and Institutional Safeguards

The Indian Constitution protects these features through:

- **Article 14** (Equality before Law)
- **Article 15(1)** (Prohibition of discrimination)
- **Article 16(4)** (Reservation for socially and educationally backward)
- **Article 29 & 30** (Cultural and educational rights of minorities)

Institutions like NCBC (**National Commission for Backward Classes**) and NCM (**National Commission for Minorities**) are tasked with monitoring safeguards.



XI. Challenges to Salient Features of Indian Society

1. Communal Tensions

- Rise in hate crimes against minorities in urban clusters
- 2024 NCRB report showed a 12% rise in communal violence cases

2. Decline of Tolerance

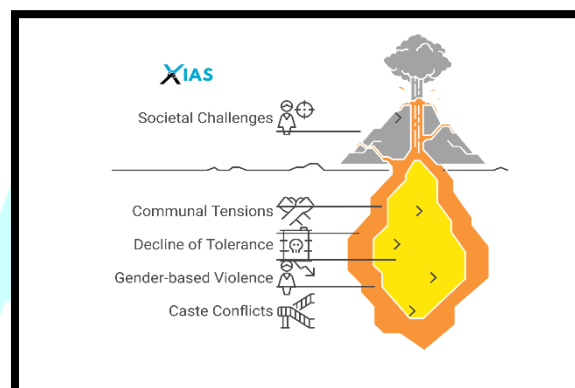
- Growth of religious extremism online and offline
- Loss of syncretism in some educational narratives

3. Gender-based Violence

- NFHS-5: Over 29% of Indian women reported domestic violence; actual figures may be underreported

4. Caste Conflicts

- Tensions in Rajasthan, MP over Dalit access to public spaces and temples



XII. Suggestions and Reforms

- **Educational Reforms:** Promote value-based and interfaith education (NEP 2020 implementation at state levels).
- **Civic Engagement:** Encourage youth participation in communal harmony drives (e.g., Youth for Unity workshops – 2024 Delhi model).
- **Legal Strengthening:** Fast-track caste atrocity and gender-based crime trials through special courts.
- **Community Policing Models:** As in Kerala and Telangana, to de-escalate local inter-group tensions.

Conclusion: "Indian society survives not by force but by philosophy."

The features that define Indian society—its diversity, tolerance, community-centric values, and continuity with change—are not just historical artefacts, but **living foundations** of democracy and development. Protecting them requires not just laws, but **awareness, empathy, and inclusive policies**.

Section 3: Unity in Diversity – Structural Basis of Indian Society

“Unity in diversity is not a slogan in India—it is the very DNA of its civilization.”

—Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

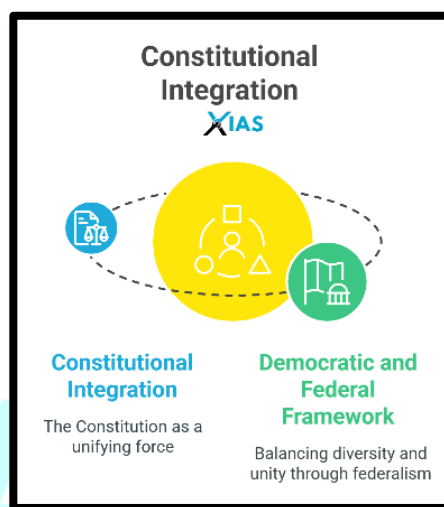
Indian society stands as a civilizational model where **plurality is not just tolerated but celebrated**. Despite staggering heterogeneity—across language, religion, ethnicity, culture, and geography—**India sustains a cohesive national identity**. This phenomenon is not incidental, but rooted in several structural, historical, and philosophical foundations that have enabled peaceful coexistence over millennia.

I. Core Structural Foundations of Unity

India’s unity is sustained by deeply embedded **historical, institutional, and socio-cultural structures**, which offer resilience in the face of division.

1. Constitutional Integration

- The **Constitution of India** (1950) is the supreme unifier.
- Guarantees **equal rights** (Articles 14–18), **freedom of religion** (Articles 25–28), and **cultural and educational rights** (Articles 29–30).
- Reinforces national identity through **common citizenship** and **uniform civil authority**.



2. Democratic and Federal Framework

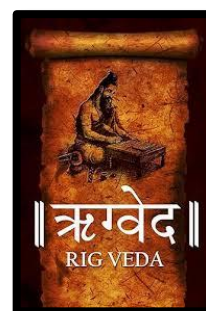
- **Federalism with a unitary bias** ensures both diversity and unity.
- States have linguistic, cultural autonomy under **Schedule VII** but are linked by Parliament, Election Commission, Supreme Court, and All India Services.

Example: In the 2024 General Elections, a Tamil voter, a Manipuri soldier, and a Gujarati trader all voted under the same electoral code, upholding a unified democratic fabric.

II. Historical and Cultural Cementing Forces

1. Shared Civilizational Ethos

- Ancient texts like **Rig Veda** (“*Ekam Sat Viprah Bahudha Vadanti*”) advocated pluralism.
- **Mauryan and Gupta empires, Bhakti and Sufi movements, and freedom struggle** forged inclusive values.



2. Common Heritage and Symbols

- Sites like **Varanasi, Nalanda, Ajanta, and Taj Mahal** reflect cultural integration.
- National symbols like **Tiranga (flag), Jana Gana Mana (anthem)**, and festivals like **Independence Day** serve as emotional glue.

3. Composite Cultural Traditions

- **Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb** in North India, **Sanskritised Islam** in South India, **Christian tribalism** in the Northeast — all reveal syncretic evolution.



III. Societal Institutions Promoting Unity

1. Family and Kinship

- Family is a universal, cross-cultural social unit; values like **respect for elders, marriage customs, and kinship networks** cut across caste and region.

2. Education and Language Linkages

- Despite linguistic diversity, **Hindi and English** act as link languages across states.
- NCERT curriculum promotes a **pan-Indian identity** across schools.

Data Point (2024): Over **94% of Indian students** study at least one non-native language at school—building national linguistic bridges.

IV. Economic and Institutional Interdependence

1. Interstate Labour and Markets

- **Bihari workers in Punjab, Bengali workers in Kerala, Tamil software engineers in Bengaluru** – all reflect functional economic unity.
- **GST (Goods and Services Tax) and Digital India** have unified markets across states.

2. Common Legal and Administrative Systems

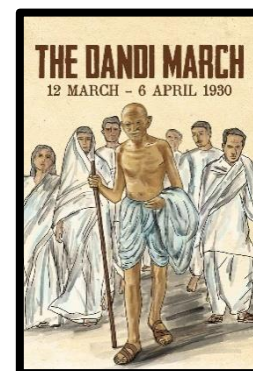
- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (earlier IPC), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (earlier CRPC), Income Tax Act, etc.,** are uniformly applicable across India.
- **IAS, IPS, IFS** officers serve across states, bringing uniform governance.



V. Political and Nationalist Movements

- **Indian National Movement** united diverse religious, caste, and regional groups under one cause.
- Freedom icons like **Gandhi, Ambedkar, Tagore, Subhas Bose** were revered across regions.

Case Study: The Dandi March (1930) saw participation from Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, women, and Dalits—reflecting the strength of collective national aspiration.



VI. Challenges to Unity in Diversity (2024–25)

Despite these structural strengths, modern India faces serious **centrifugal forces**:

1. Communalism and Polarisation

- Rise in religion-based hate crimes.
- NCRB 2024 reported a **14% increase** in communal incidents in urban zones.

2. Regionalism and Sub-Nationalism

- Movements for greater autonomy in Tamil Nadu, Punjab, and Northeast.
- Demand for **State-specific language-based quotas** (e.g., Marathi in Maharashtra).

3. Linguistic Chauvinism

- Hindi imposition protests in Tamil Nadu.
- Delay in **8th Schedule inclusion** of languages like Bhojpuri, Tulu, and Bodo.

4. Digital Echo Chambers

- Algorithms foster **linguistic and ideological silos**, reducing cross-cultural understanding.
- Recent cases of fake videos triggering inter-community tensions.

VII. Suggestions and Best Practices

1. Strengthening Federalism

- Empower **Inter-State Council** and **Zonal Councils** for better state-centre dialogue.
- Promote **cooperative federalism** through forums like NITI Aayog.

2. Linguistic Accommodation

- Implement **Three-Language Formula** pragmatically to balance national and regional identities.

3. National Integration Campaigns

- Revive ‘**Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**’ program with real state-exchange immersion (2024–25 Budget: ₹330 crore allocated under CBCS—Cultural Exchange).

4. Countering Digital Polarisation

- Ministry of I&B to regulate hate content; encourage civic tech like **AltNews**, **BoomLive** to debunk misinformation.

5. Education and Youth Engagement

- NCERT to include more **multi-faith history modules**.
- Introduce **Youth National Harmony Fellowships** under Nehru Yuva Kendra Scheme.

Conclusion: Unity is Engineered, Not Assumed

Indian unity is not an accident of history but an **architectural marvel of culture, law, economics, and shared emotion**. As diversity deepens in modern India, sustaining unity demands both institutional robustness and social imagination. It is not enough to coexist—we must **actively co-create** a society where every identity feels included in the idea of India.

Section 4: Caste, Class, and Kinship – Stratification and Mobility

“Caste is not merely a division of labour; it is a division of labourers.” —Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Indian society has historically been structured around **complex systems of stratification**, primarily the **caste system, class hierarchy**, and deeply rooted **kinship patterns**. These structures have dictated access to resources, political representation, social mobility, and interpersonal relationships. While modern institutions have attempted to disrupt traditional hierarchies, their **interplay continues to shape socio-economic outcomes in India**.

I. Conceptual Foundations of Stratification

1. Caste System

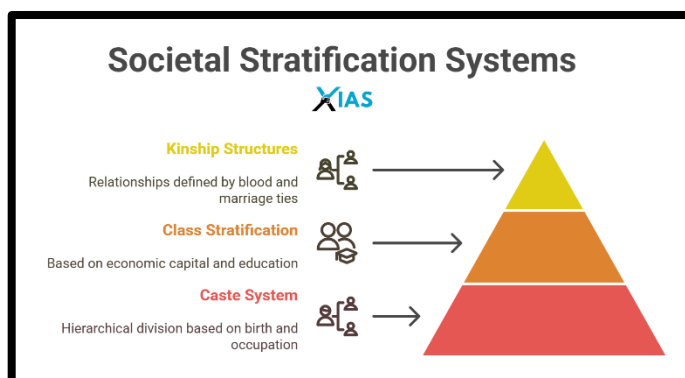
- Originates from **Varna (theoretical model)** and **Jati (practical expression)**.
- Hierarchical division based on **birth, purity-pollution**, and **occupational roles**.
- Institutionalised **endogamy** (marriage within the group) and **ritual status**.
- Constitutionally abolished as a discriminative system (Article 17: Abolition of Untouchability).

2. Class Stratification

- Based on **economic capital, education**, and **occupational status**.
- More **fluid and dynamic** than caste.
- Increasingly overlaps with caste in the form of **“caste-class continuum.”**

3. Kinship Structures

- Systems of relationships defined by **blood (consanguineal)** and **marriage (affinal)** ties.
- **North India**: predominance of **patrilineal joint families**.
- **South India**: practices of **cross-cousin marriages, matrilineal traces** (e.g., in Kerala’s Nair community).



- Determines **inheritance, residence, and lineage** patterns.

II. Persistence and Transformation in Contemporary India

1. Caste in Modern Institutions

- Caste persists in **electoral politics, public employment, and education**.
- **Mandal Commission implementation (1990)** institutionalised caste-based reservations.
- Political mobilisations around **caste identities** (e.g., Jat, Patidar, Maratha agitations).

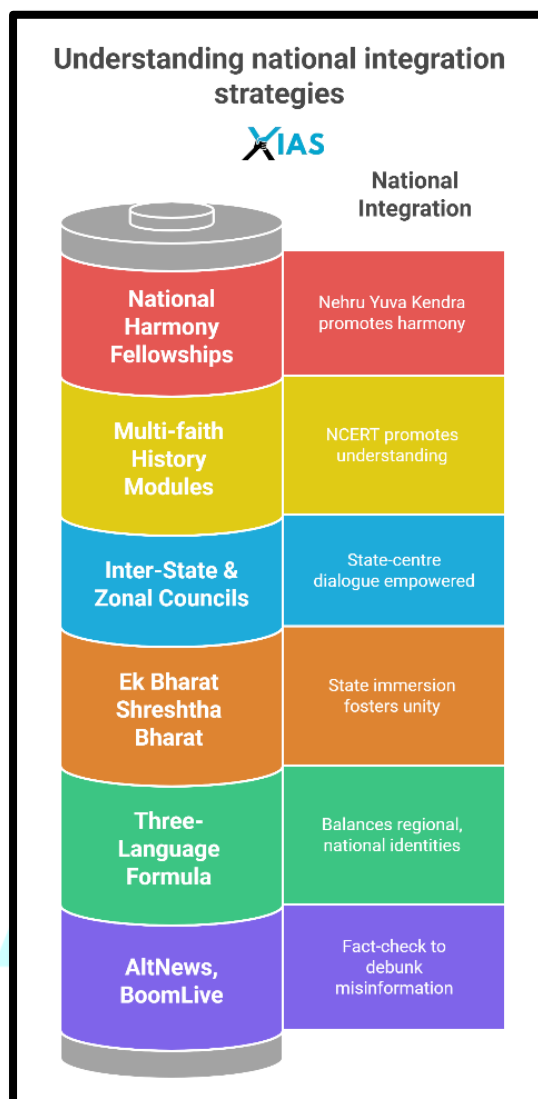
Example: Bihar caste survey 2023 revealed **over 63% population belonging to OBC/SC/ST**, prompting renewed policy debates on reservation ceilings.

2. Economic Liberalisation and Class Mobility

- Economic reforms (1991 onwards) enabled **urban middle class emergence**.
- Caste still mediates access to **capital, credit, networks**.
- Rise of **neo-middle-class Dalits** (e.g., Dalit entrepreneurs supported under Stand-Up India Scheme 2024).

3. Kinship under Pressure

- Urbanisation and migration promoting **nuclear families**.
- Rise in **inter-caste and inter-religious marriages** (though still <10%, NFHS-5).
- **Digital matrimonial platforms** reinforcing caste endogamy despite tech modernity.



III. Multi-Dimensional Challenges

A. Social Challenges

- **Caste atrocities** remain widespread (NCRB 2024: Over **57,000 registered cases** under SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act).
- **Honor killings** in inter-caste marriages (notably in Haryana, Tamil Nadu).
- **Kin-based exclusion** of women from property rights in many communities.



B. Economic Challenges

- Low **inter-generational class mobility** for lower castes.
- **Caste capital** (social networks, cultural confidence) continues to shape job access.
- Persistence of **manual scavenging, bonded labour**, especially among Dalits.

C. Political Challenges

- Caste-based vote bank politics undermining **issue-based representation**.
- Demands for **caste census** and revised reservation policies intensifying regional tensions.

IV. Suggestions and Official Recommendations

1. Recommendations of the Rohini Commission (2023)

- Urged **sub-categorisation of OBCs** to ensure equitable distribution of reservation.
- Emphasised **data-driven targeting** of welfare benefits.

2. Legal and Institutional Reforms

- Strengthen enforcement of **SC/ST (PoA) Act** with real-time grievance tracking.
- **NITI Aayog** to promote caste-neutral entrepreneurship schemes with equity focus.

3. Promoting Inter-caste Integration

- Incentivise inter-caste marriages via enhanced **Dr. Ambedkar Foundation Scheme** (₹2.5 lakh support raised to ₹5 lakh in 2024 Budget).
- Introduce **caste sensitisation modules** in schools, colleges, and training institutes.

4. Recognising Kinship Diversity

- Mainstream non-patriarchal family systems in **property laws** and **inheritance rights**.
- **Law Commission** to explore **uniform marriage code** protecting inter-faith and inter-caste unions.

V. Best Practices and Positive Trends

- **Kerala and Karnataka** adopted **inclusive school curriculums** challenging caste stereotypes.
- **Dalit Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICCI)** supporting grassroots entrepreneurship across India.
- **SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association)** model integrates kinship-based women collectives into labour markets.

Conclusion: Breaking Walls, Building Bridges

Caste, class, and kinship—once rigid social constructs—are slowly undergoing transformation under the pressure of **economic reforms, democratic awareness, and rights-based movements**. Yet, their deep entrenchment in the cultural psyche of India demands **continuous engagement**, institutional reform, and **ethical leadership**. A just Indian society will emerge not by erasing differences, but by ensuring that **difference does not become a barrier to dignity and mobility**.

Section 5: Religious and Linguistic Pluralism in Indian Society

“India has been the cradle of all religions, and the meeting point of all languages; unity has emerged not by assimilation, but by accommodation.” —Jawaharlal Nehru

Religious and linguistic pluralism are among the most defining and enduring features of Indian society. India is home to **almost every major world religion** and boasts of **22 constitutionally recognized official languages**, with **over 19,500 mother tongues spoken**, as per Census 2011. These pluralistic elements have both **enriched India's cultural fabric** and posed significant governance and social challenges. Their **sensitive management is central to India's national integration and democratic ethos**.

I. Religious Pluralism in India

1. Diversity of Faith Traditions

- India is the **birthplace of four major religions**: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism.
- It also accommodates large populations of **Muslims (14.2%), Christians (2.3%), Parsis, Jews, and Bahá'ís**.
- Religious practices range from **monotheism (Islam, Christianity)** to **polytheism and non-theism (Hinduism, Jainism)**.

2. Constitutional and Legal Safeguards

- **Article 25–28** guarantee freedom of religion.
- **Article 30** safeguards religious minorities' right to establish educational institutions.
- India is officially a **secular state** (42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976).

Example: In 2024, India hosted **Inter-Faith Harmony Conferences** under the Ministry of Minority Affairs, promoting religious tolerance and inclusive dialogue.

II. Linguistic Pluralism in India

1. Rich Linguistic Diversity

- **22 official languages** under **8th Schedule**, including Hindi, Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, etc.
- Over **19,500 languages/dialects** spoken (Census 2011).
- Linguistic families include **Indo-Aryan (north)**, **Dravidian (south)**, **Tibeto-Burman (northeast)**, and **Austroasiatic (central India)**.



2. Three-Language Formula

- Designed to promote **national unity while respecting regional linguistic identities**.
- Often criticized for unequal implementation—particularly over **Hindi imposition concerns** in southern states.

Data Point: Over **43.6% of Indians** speak Hindi, but less than 20% are native Hindi speakers—highlighting the complexity of national language policy (Census 2011, validated by Education Ministry data 2024).

III. Role of Religion and Language in Social Fabric

- Religious festivals like **Diwali, Eid, Christmas, Baisakhi**, etc., are celebrated across communities.
- Common linguistic linkages through **Hindi cinema, popular culture, and English education** create shared experiences.

Case Study: In 2024, the **LangFest India** initiative by Ministry of Culture promoted multilingual poetry slams and folk storytelling across 14 states—strengthening interlingual harmony.

IV. Multi-Dimensional Challenges

A. Religious Polarisation and Intolerance

- **Increase in hate crimes** and communal violence (NCRB 2024 recorded a 12.6% rise in communal incidents).
- Targeting of religious minorities (e.g., attacks on Christian tribal villages in Chhattisgarh, 2024).
- Use of **religion-based political mobilisation** during elections.

B. Linguistic Chauvinism

- Resistance to Hindi in **Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Northeast**.
- Demand for inclusion of more languages in **8th Schedule** (e.g., **Tulu, Bhojpuri, Rajasthani**).
- Perceived **elitism of English** as a medium of upward mobility.

C. Digital Fragmentation and Echo Chambers

- Online platforms amplifying **religious and linguistic misinformation**.
- **Deepfakes and WhatsApp forwards** inciting inter-community tensions.

V. Government Efforts and Policy Measures

1. For Religious Harmony

- **National Integration Council** revived to monitor religious polarisation.

- **Sadbhavana Mission** (2023–24) launched to build youth-led interfaith campaigns in sensitive districts.

2. For Linguistic Pluralism

- **Bhasha Sangam Initiative** under **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB)** promotes learning of multiple Indian languages among students.
- **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** encourages **mother tongue-based primary education**, with flexibility for second and third languages.



Budget 2024–25: ₹615 crore allocated for promotion of minority affairs and language preservation under the Ministry of Culture.

VI. Suggestions and Best Practices

1. Strengthen Interfaith Education

- Integrate comparative religion as **elective module** in senior secondary curriculum.
- Encourage **interfaith community service** models (as followed by institutions like St. Stephen's College and Azim Premji University).

2. Linguistic Decentralisation

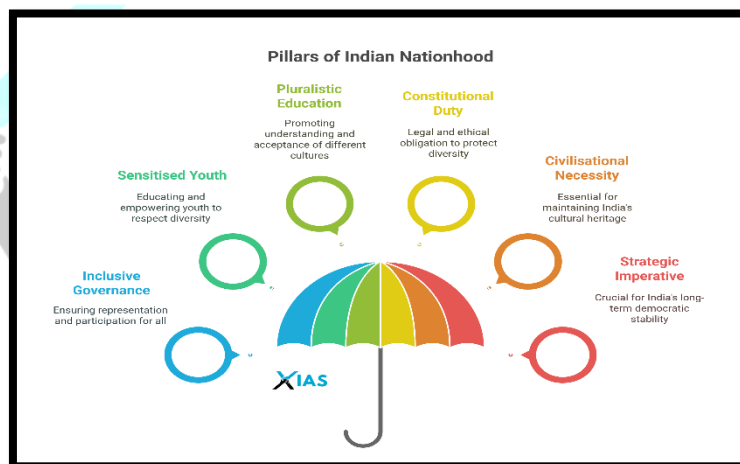
- Expedite recognition of deserving languages in **8th Schedule** using **Language Expert Committee Reports**.
- Enhance regional language interface in all government apps, portals, and public services.

3. Regulating Digital Content

- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to **deploy AI-based hate speech tracking** in regional languages.

4. Strengthen Minority Cultural Institutions

- Promote **language-specific cultural academies** (like Urdu Akademi, Kannada Sahitya Parishat) at district level.
- Allocate more **CSR funds** for cultural pluralism campaigns through **public-private partnerships**.



Conclusion: Pluralism is the Pulse of Indian Nationhood

India's strength lies not in uniformity, but in the **dignified coexistence of differences**. The future of India's religious and linguistic harmony will depend on **inclusive governance, sensitised youth, and pluralistic education**. Protecting these diversities is not just a constitutional duty—it is a **civilisational necessity** and a **strategic imperative** for India's democratic resilience.

Section 6: Tribes and Scheduled Areas – Marginalisation and Identity

“The true measure of progress is not in the height of our skyscrapers, but in how we lift the lowest among us.” —Jawaharlal Nehru

India’s tribal population, representing **8.6% of the total population** (Census 2011), constitutes one of the most distinct and historically marginalised social groups. Spread across **hilly terrains, forests, and borderlands**, Scheduled Tribes (STs) have unique cultural systems, languages, belief structures, and customary laws. However, **colonial exclusion**, post-independence development models, and weak institutional support have rendered their **identity vulnerable** and **development uneven**, particularly in the context of **Scheduled Areas** under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution.

I. Conceptual Understanding of Tribes and Scheduled Areas

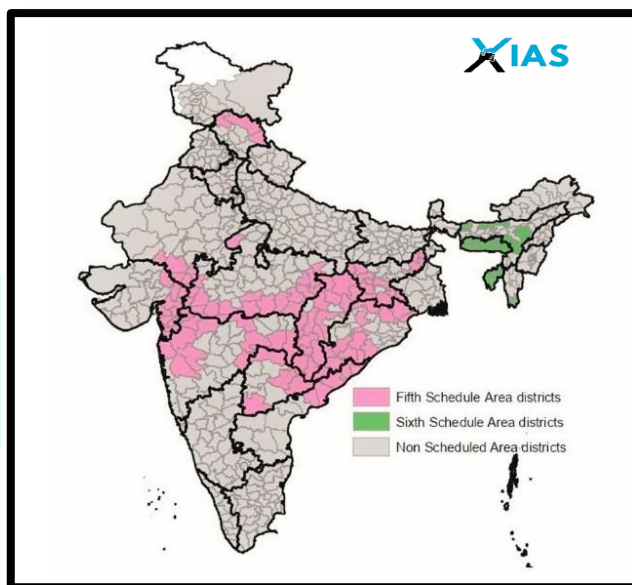
1. Who Are the Scheduled Tribes?

- No **universal definition**; identified based on **geographical isolation, backwardness, distinctive culture, and shyness of contact** (Lokur Committee, 1965).
- **705 communities notified** as Scheduled Tribes under Article 342.
- Constitutionally safeguarded under **Articles 15(4), 46, 244, 275, 330–342**.

2. Scheduled Areas

- Governed under **Fifth Schedule** (mainland India) and **Sixth Schedule** (North-East).
- Designated for **autonomous governance, land protection, and cultural preservation**.
- Notified in **10 states** including Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, and Maharashtra.

Example: In 2024, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs issued updated guidelines for faster implementation of the **PESA Act (Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996)** across all notified districts.



II. Key Features of Tribal Identity and Culture

- Rich traditions of **oral storytelling, dance, music, and animistic faith systems**.
- **Clan-based** community structures and **collective ownership of natural resources**.
- Languages often part of **Austroasiatic, Dravidian, and Tibeto-Burman families**.

Case Study: The **Dongria Kondh** of Odisha preserve **sacred groves**, maintain **matrilineal inheritance**, and follow **slash-and-burn (Podu) agriculture**. They successfully resisted Vedanta’s mining project in the Niyamgiri Hills in a historic 2013 Supreme Court ruling reaffirmed by Gram Sabhas.

III. Dimensions of Marginalisation

A. Economic Exclusion

- **Poverty rate among STs is 45.3%** (NITI Aayog Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023), the highest among all social groups.
- Limited access to **education, credit, markets, and infrastructure** in Scheduled Areas.

- Dispossession due to **mining, hydropower projects, and forest laws**.

Example: In 2024, a CAG report revealed that **over 21% of forest land diverted for mining in Jharkhand was originally tribal commons**.

B. Political Underrepresentation

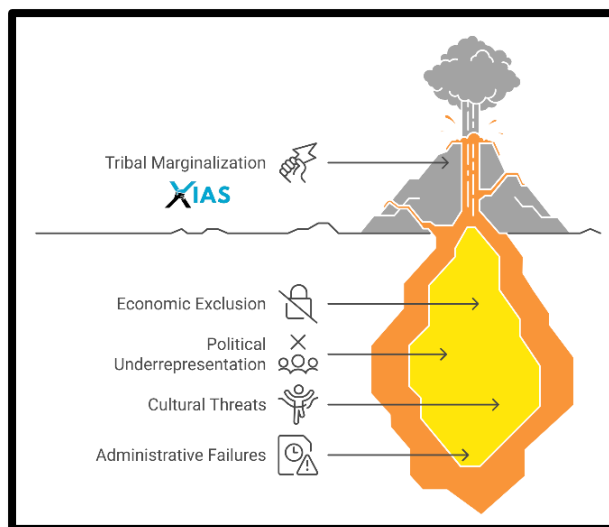
- STs have **reserved seats in Parliament and Assemblies**, yet lack meaningful participation in decision-making bodies.
- **Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)** under the Sixth Schedule remain underfunded and politically sidelined.

C. Cultural Threats

- Loss of languages: As per the People's Linguistic Survey of India (2024 update), over **100 tribal languages are critically endangered**.
- Assimilation pressures through **mainstream education, media, and religion**.

D. Administrative Failures

- Poor implementation of **PESA and Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006**.
- In 2024, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs flagged that only **16% of eligible land claims** under FRA had been granted across Scheduled Areas.



IV. Suggestions and Committee Recommendations

1. Xaxa Committee (2014)

- Urged for **context-sensitive education, decentralised governance, and community-managed development plans**.
- Recommended **constitutional status to PESA** and codification of **customary laws**.

2. NITI Aayog's Tribal Development Report (2023–24)

- Called for **geo-spatial planning for Scheduled Areas**, targeted funding through **Tribal Sub-Plan**, and **livelihood diversification**.

3. Strengthening Autonomous Councils

- Empower Sixth Schedule ADCs with **direct devolution of finances**.
- Introduce **tribal think tanks** and youth-led cultural research units at district level.

V. Best Practices and Policy Interventions

- **Van Dhan Yojana** expanded in 2024–25 Budget with ₹1,800 crore to support tribal minor forest produce enterprises.
- **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** network scaled to over 700 schools as of 2024 to improve tribal education.
- **Jharkhand's Adivasi Budget (2024–25)** earmarked ₹5,200 crore exclusively for ST welfare—first such state initiative.
- **Niyamgiri model** of Gram Sabha-led environmental approvals upheld by MoEFCC as a template for PESA implementation.



Conclusion: Justice Through Dignified Autonomy

Tribal communities are not 'backward'—they are **culturally distinct** and **historically excluded**. The solution lies not in mainstreaming through assimilation, but in **empowering tribes to define development on their own terms**. With robust laws like PESA and FRA, and the political will to implement them, **India**

can ensure that its development trajectory is inclusive, ethical, and grounded in environmental justice.

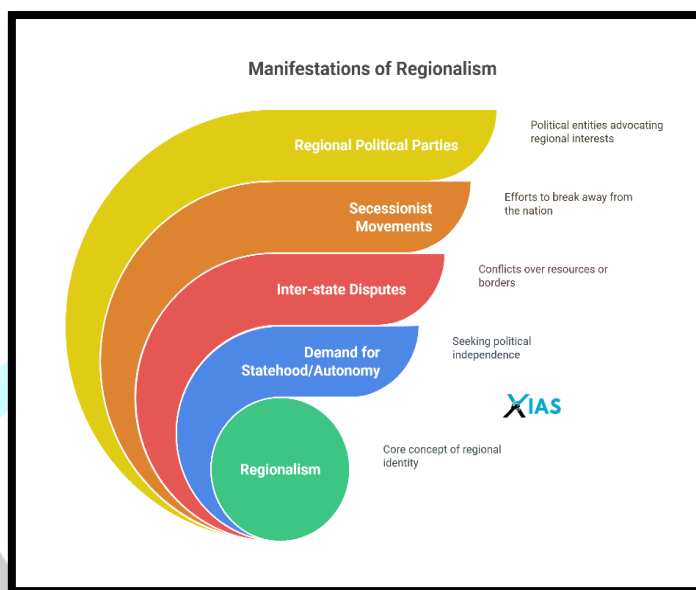
Section 7: Regionalism and Unity in Diversity – Conflict and Accommodation

“Unity in diversity is not an ideal; it is India’s lived experience, constantly negotiated and preserved.”

Regionalism in India arises from strong emotional attachment to one’s region, often linked to language, ethnicity, culture, and uneven development. While it can promote regional identity and federalism, it also risks degenerating into parochialism and secessionism if left unaddressed. Hence, managing regional aspirations within the constitutional framework is vital to preserve India’s pluralistic unity.

I. Conceptual Understanding of Regionalism

- **Regionalism** refers to the **political consciousness or identity-based assertion** by people of a particular region, demanding recognition, autonomy, or resources.
- It manifests in different forms:
 - **Demand for statehood/autonomy** (e.g., Telangana, Gorkhaland)
 - **Inter-state disputes** (e.g., Cauvery water, Belagavi border)
 - **Secessionist movements** (e.g., earlier in Punjab, J&K, North-East)
 - **Regional political parties** (e.g., DMK, Shiv Sena)



II. Types of Regionalism in India

- **Parochial Regionalism:** Hostile to other regions (e.g., “sons of the soil” movements)
- **Balanced Regionalism:** Focus on equitable development (e.g., Telangana movement)
- **Demand for Autonomy:** Within federal framework (e.g., Bodoland, Ladakh UT demand)

Example: In 2023–24, the **Kuki-Meitei conflict in Manipur** exposed deep ethnic fault lines, administrative mismanagement, and need for deeper regional reconciliation.

III. Causes Behind Rise of Regionalism

- **Economic Imbalances:** Perceived discrimination in allocation of resources and investments.
 - E.g., Vidarbha in Maharashtra and Bundelkhand in UP alleging neglect.
- **Linguistic and Cultural Assertion:** Strong identity linked to language and heritage.
 - E.g., Tamil nationalism resisting imposition of Hindi.
- **Administrative Centralisation:** Perception of over-centralisation fuels autonomy demands.
- **Neglect of Regional History and Aspirations** in national discourse and media.

IV. Challenges of Regionalism

A. Political Fragmentation

- Rise of **regional political parties** influencing national coalition politics.

- Disruption in **Centre-State fiscal and administrative relations**

B. Inter-State Conflicts

- Disputes over rivers (Cauvery: TN vs. Karnataka), dams (Polavaram: Odisha vs. AP), and boundaries (Assam vs. Mizoram, 2021–24 flare-ups).

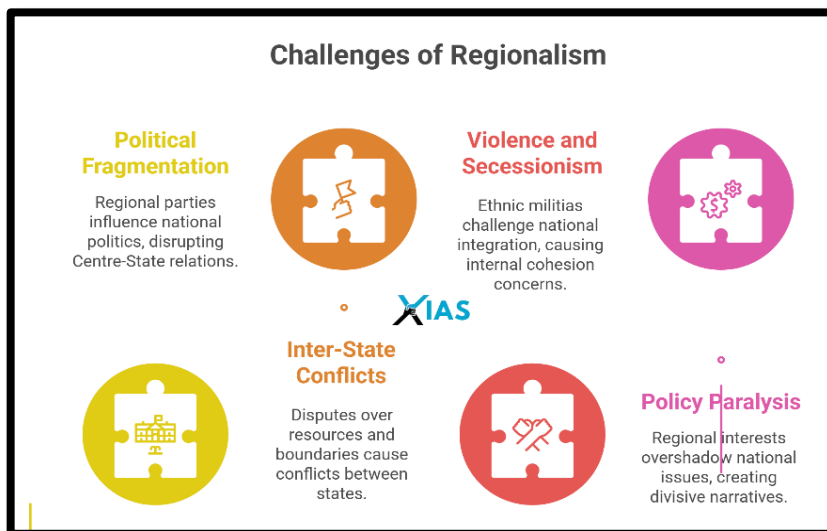
C. Violence and Secessionism

- Armed ethnic militias in Northeast (e.g., NSCN factions) continue to challenge national integration.

2024: **Meitei-Kuki ethnic clashes** in Manipur led to over 60,000 displaced, triggering global concern over India's internal cohesion.

D. Policy Paralysis and Identity Politics

- Focus on **narrow regional interests** over national issues in Parliament and assemblies.
- Use of regionalism for electoral gains creates **"us vs. them" narratives**.



V. Government Response and Frameworks

- **Constitutional Accommodation:**
 - Federal structure (Article 1–395)
 - **Linguistic Reorganization of States (1956)**
 - **6th Schedule** (autonomous councils in NE)
- **Inter-State Council and Zonal Councils:** Platforms for Centre-State and inter-state coordination.
- **Union Budget 2025–26 Initiatives:**
 - **Infrastructure Development:**
 - Allocation of ₹11.21 lakh crore for the infrastructure sector, aiming to boost regional connectivity and economic growth.
 - ₹1.5 trillion in 50-year interest-free loans to states for infrastructure development, facilitating region-specific projects.
 - **Urban Development:**
 - ₹96,777 crore allocated for urban development, marking a 17% rise, with a focus on transport, housing, and regional planning.
 - **Rural Development:**
 - Allocation towards Rural Development increased by ₹14,527 crore (8.3%) to ₹1,90,406 crore in 2025–26, primarily due to increased funding for PMAY-Rural and the National Rural Livelihoods Mission.
 - **Regional Connectivity:**
 - Enhanced regional air connectivity to 120 new destinations over the next decade under the modified UDAN scheme, aiming to serve 4 crore passengers.

VI. Suggestions and Best Practices

1. Strengthen Cooperative Federalism

- Revive **Inter-State Council** and **National Development Council (NDC)** for consensus-building.
- Implement **Finance Commission** recommendations for region-specific fiscal transfers.

2. Regional Economic Empowerment

- Promote region-specific missions (e.g., **Mission Purvoday** for East India, **Desert Development Programme** for Rajasthan).
- Encourage **One District One Product (ODOP)** schemes to build economic pride.

3. Cultural Integration

- Expand **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat** to institutions and civil society exchanges.
- Integrate regional heroes, languages, and folk traditions into **school curricula**.



4. Political Decentralisation

- Strengthen **Panchayati Raj and Autonomous Councils** in backward regions.
- Explore **asymmetric federalism** where needed (as in J&K, Ladakh, NE).

5. Conflict Mediation Structures

- Appoint **inter-state dispute resolution commissions** with binding timelines and recommendations.

Conclusion: Pluralistic Nationalism, Not Uniformity

Regionalism is not a threat to national unity, unless it turns militant or exclusionary. India's unity lies in its **federal flexibility, cultural accommodation, and constitutional wisdom**. Managing regional demands through equitable development, democratic dialogue, and inclusive policies can ensure that **diversity remains India's greatest strength, not its fault line**.

Section 8: Urbanisation and Social Change – Migration, Slums, and Inequality

“Cities are not just engines of growth; they are mirrors of social transformation.”

Urbanisation in India has been a double-edged sword—while cities have become hubs of economic activity, innovation, and opportunity, they also grapple with challenges like unplanned expansion, inadequate infrastructure, and growing socio-economic disparities. The rapid influx of migrants, proliferation of slums, and persistent urban poverty underscore the need for inclusive and sustainable urban development.

I. Urbanisation Trends and Patterns

- **Urban Population Growth:** India's urban population is projected to reach 600 million by 2031, up from 377 million in 2011, indicating a significant demographic shift.
- **Migration Dynamics:** Economic opportunities, education, and better living standards continue to drive rural-to-urban migration.
- **Emergence of Urban Agglomerations:** Cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad are expanding into mega urban regions, leading to challenges in governance and service delivery.

II. Challenges of Urbanisation

A. Migration and Informal Settlements

- **Unplanned Settlements:** Rapid migration has led to the growth of informal settlements lacking basic amenities.
- **Employment Vulnerabilities:** Migrants often engage in informal sector jobs with low wages and no social security.
- **Social Integration:** Migrants face challenges in accessing education, healthcare, and housing, leading to social exclusion.

B. Slum Proliferation

- **Housing Deficit:** Urban areas face a shortage of affordable housing, pushing low-income groups into slums.

- **Health and Sanitation:** Overcrowded slums with inadequate sanitation facilities contribute to health hazards.
- **Legal Insecurity:** Residents often lack legal rights to land, making them vulnerable to evictions.

C. Urban Inequality

- **Access to Services:** Disparities exist in access to quality education, healthcare, and public services between affluent and marginalized communities.
- **Digital Divide:** Limited access to digital infrastructure hampers opportunities for the urban poor.
- **Environmental Inequities:** Poorer neighbourhoods often face higher exposure to pollution and lack green spaces.

III. Government Initiatives and Budget 2025-26 Allocations

A. Housing and Infrastructure

- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban):** Continues to aim for "Housing for All" by providing affordable housing to urban poor.
- **SWAMIH Fund 2:** A ₹15,000 crore fund announced to expedite the completion of stalled housing projects, benefiting middle-income and economically weaker sections.

B. Urban Development

- **Urban Infrastructure Development:** An allocation of ₹1.5 lakh crore as 50-year interest-free loans to states for capital expenditure in urban infrastructure projects.
- **Urban Challenge Fund:** A ₹1 lakh crore fund to support transformative urban projects, with ₹10,000 crore allocated for 2025-26.

C. Employment and Livelihoods

- **PM SVANidhi Scheme:** Continues to provide micro-credit to street vendors, promoting financial inclusion and entrepreneurship.
- **National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM):** Focuses on skill development and employment opportunities for the urban poor.

IV. Suggestions and Best Practices

1. Inclusive Urban Planning

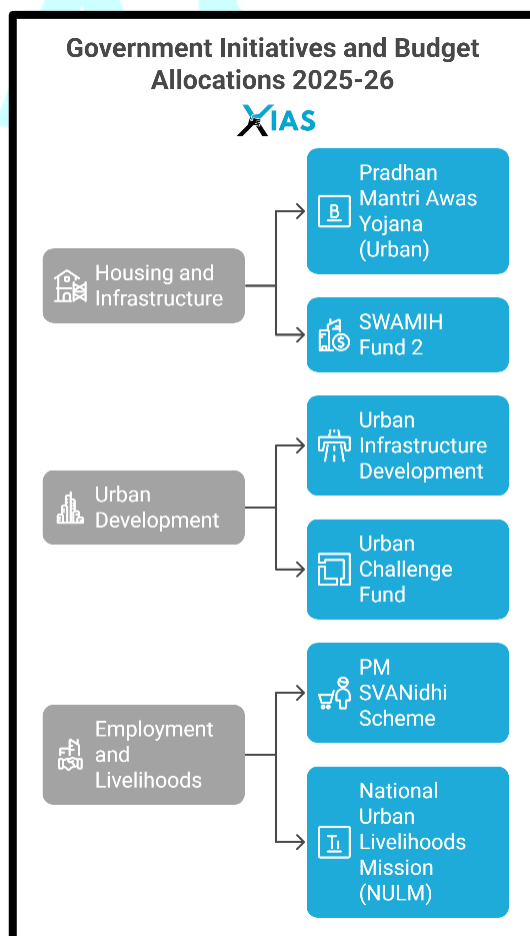
- **Participatory Governance:** Engage communities in planning processes to ensure that development meets local needs.
- **Affordable Housing Policies:** Implement policies that mandate a percentage of housing projects for low-income groups.

2. Slum Upgradation

- **In-Situ Redevelopment:** Upgrade existing slums with basic services without displacing residents.
- **Legal Recognition:** Provide legal titles to slum dwellers to ensure tenure security.

3. Sustainable Infrastructure

- **Green Spaces:** Develop parks and open spaces to improve urban livability.
- **Public Transport:** Invest in efficient and affordable public transportation to reduce congestion and pollution.



4. Digital Inclusion

- **Digital Literacy Programs:** Implement training programs to enhance digital skills among the urban poor.
- **Access to Technology:** Provide affordable internet and devices to bridge the digital divide.

Conclusion

Urbanisation, if managed effectively, can be a catalyst for economic growth and social transformation. Addressing the challenges of migration, slums, and inequality requires a multifaceted approach that combines inclusive planning, targeted investments, and community participation. The Union Budget 2025–26 reflects a commitment to building resilient and equitable urban spaces, but sustained efforts and innovative solutions are essential to realize the vision of inclusive urban development.

Section 9: Women and Youth – Agents of Social Change

“Empowerment is the process of enabling the powerless to challenge existing systems of injustice and inequality.”

Women and youth together constitute over **65% of India’s population**—a powerful demographic with the potential to redefine the social fabric of the country. Yet, systemic barriers of patriarchy, unemployment, and digital inequality restrict their transformative role. Recognizing this, **Budget 2025–26** has brought targeted reforms to enhance their participation in education, economy, and governance. However, implementation challenges remain stark and complex.

I. Conceptual Foundation: Why Focus on Women and Youth?

- **Women** are central to household decision-making, agricultural production, informal workforce, and increasingly, political representation. However, social norms and institutional structures often marginalize them.
- **Youth** (15–29 years) are critical to India’s demographic dividend, but they face structural disadvantages in skilling, employability, and participation in public discourse.

The convergence of gender and youth-related policies is essential for achieving **social justice, economic growth, and inclusive governance**.

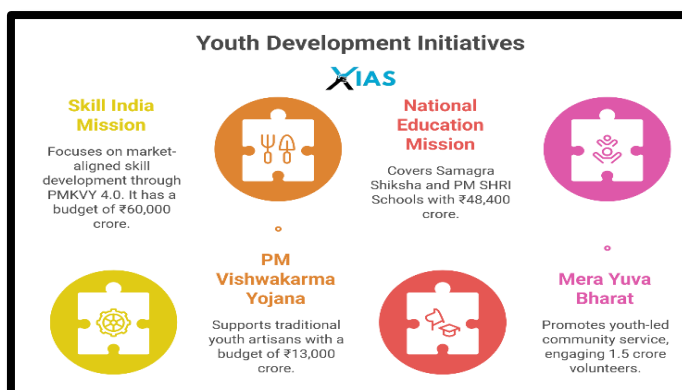
II. Budget 2025–26: Key Provisions for Empowerment

A. Women-Specific Allocations

- **Gender Budget increased to ₹4.49 lakh crore**, up by 12.5% from 2024–25.
- Major allocations under:
 - **Mission Shakti (₹35,000 crore):** Including *Sambal* (protection) and *Samarthyaa* (empowerment).
 - **Subhadra Yojana:** ₹5,000/year support to low-income women over 5 years (Direct Benefit Transfer).
 - **POSHAN 2.0 and Saksham Anganwadi (₹21,960 crore):** Targeting child and maternal nutrition.

B. Youth-Specific Allocations

- **Skill India Mission (₹60,000 crore):** Includes PMKVY 4.0 for market-aligned skill development.



- **PM Vishwakarma Yojana (₹13,000 crore):** Traditional youth artisans support.
- **National Education Mission (₹48,400 crore):** Covers Samagra Shiksha and PM SHRI Schools.
- **Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat):** Promotes structured youth-led community service with 1.5 crore volunteers enrolled in 2024–25.

III. Detailed and Multi-Dimensional Challenges

1. Gender Inequality in Labour Force

- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** for women in India remains **below 25%** (PLFS 2023–24).
- Even when employed, over **70% of rural women** work as unpaid family labour.
- **Wage discrimination** persists across sectors: Average female wage is **27% lower** than male for same work (NSSO 2024).
- Lack of **workplace infrastructure** (e.g. crèches, toilets) further discourages women's participation.

2. Skilling and Employability Deficit Among Youth

- Over **1.4 crore youth** are unemployed, with **educated unemployment highest among graduates** (NSSO 2024).
- Skill training under PMKVY has **low placement rates** due to mismatch with private sector needs.
- **Digital skill divide** is growing: Only **38% of rural youth** have access to quality digital learning platforms (ASER, 2024).

3. Lack of Social and Political Representation

- Women make up only **14.4% of Lok Sabha** and **11% of High Court judges** (Law Ministry, 2025).
- Youth voices remain underrepresented in formal political processes, despite being vocal on digital platforms.

4. Mental Health and Social Alienation

- WHO (2024) reports rising cases of **depression, anxiety, and suicide** among youth aged 15–24 in India.
- **Gender-based violence**, cyberbullying, and inadequate redressal mechanisms exacerbate disempowerment.



IV. Strategic Suggestions and Reforms

1. Policy Measures and Implementation Tools

- **Gender-Responsive Infrastructure:** Mandate safe transport, crèches, and sanitary facilities in all public workplaces.
- **Vocational and Life Skills Integration:** Embed industry-specific modules in school curriculum (PM SHRI model).
- **One-Stop Digital Youth Portal:** For real-time job updates, counseling, start-up support, and grievance redressal.

2. Committee Recommendations

- **Planning Commission's Women Empowerment Report (2011):** Advocated gender budgeting at Panchayat levels and financial literacy campaigns.

- **Draft National Youth Policy 2021:** Recommends integrated support for health, education, employability, and civic engagement through **Youth Resource Centres**.

3. Best Practices and Replicable Models

- **Kerala's Kudumbashree:** Over 45 lakh women in SHGs managing micro-enterprises, sanitation, and local governance.
- **Delhi's Mahila Mohalla Clinics:** Providing women-specific health services with doorstep access.
- **Tamil Nadu's Naan Mudhalvan Scheme:** Upskills 10 lakh+ college students with AI, cybersecurity, and analytics training.



V. 2024–25 Case Studies

- **Uttar Pradesh's Mission Shakti (2024 Revamp):** Integrated helpline, fast-track courts, and psycho-social care.
- **Odisha's Mukta Yojana for Urban Youth:** Engaged youth in community infrastructure with skill-based stipends.
- **Himachal's Startup Yatra (2025):** Targeted support for tribal and rural women tech-entrepreneurs.

VI. Conclusion

Budgetary prioritization is necessary, but **institutional redesign and societal shifts** are more vital to convert potential into progress. True empowerment of women and youth lies in giving them **autonomy, assets, and agency**—backed by budget, but sustained by **community participation and transparent governance**.

Investing in their **health, skills, safety, and voice** is no longer optional—it is foundational to India's ambition of becoming a **\$10 trillion economy and a just society by 2047**.

Section 10: Social Empowerment – Caste, Class, and Affirmative Action

“Social empowerment is not a matter of charity, but of justice and structural reform.”

– Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

India's commitment to **social empowerment** is embedded in its Constitution and reinforced by successive Five-Year Plans, budgets, and welfare laws. Yet, caste- and class-based discrimination continue to limit access to dignity, opportunity, and justice. Budget 2025–26 emphasizes **targeted inclusion, affirmative action, and empowerment-focused delivery**. However, the need to reform structures, not just allocate resources, remains critical.

I. Understanding the Concept of Social Empowerment

- **Social Empowerment** refers to enabling disadvantaged groups (especially Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), and economically weaker sections) to access education, employment, and decision-making.
- It includes dismantling **caste-based exclusion, class hierarchies, and gender-based denial of rights**, while promoting **participation and self-respect**.

II. Key Budget 2025–26 Provisions for Social Empowerment

1. Schemes for SC, ST, and OBC Welfare

- **Department of Social Justice and Empowerment:** Allocation of **₹62,840 crore** (up 13% from 2024–25).
- **Umbrella Scheme for Development of Scheduled Castes:** ₹9,680 crore
- **Development Action Plan for Scheduled Tribes (DAPST):** ₹19,500 crore
- **Pre- and Post-Matric Scholarship Schemes:**
 - ₹6,250 crore for SC students
 - ₹4,700 crore for ST students
 - ₹3,100 crore for OBC students
- **National Fellowship for Higher Education (NFHE):** Strengthened with ₹1,280 crore to support PhD-level scholars from marginal communities.

2. EWS and Class-Based Inclusion Measures

- **10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)** from General Category maintained across central institutions and services (as per the 103rd Constitutional Amendment).
- **PM-AJAY (Anusuchit Jaati Abhiyan for Justice and Awareness):** Expansion into 1,300 new districts for legal literacy and access to legal aid for Dalit victims of atrocity.

III. Multi-Dimensional Challenges

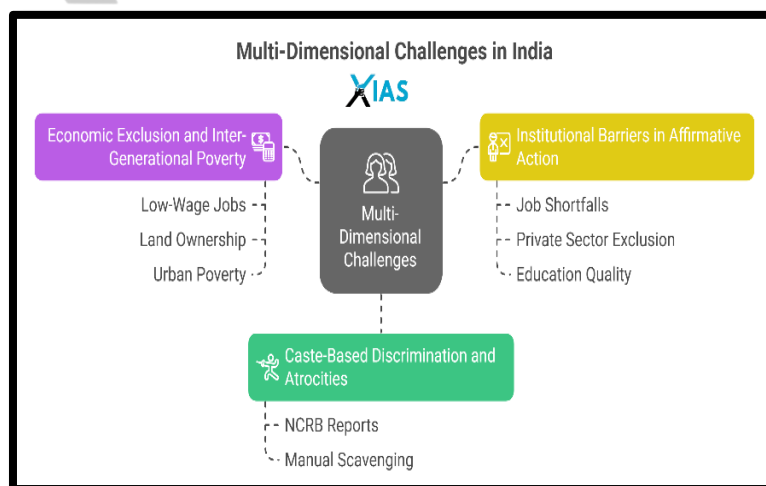
1. Caste-Based Discrimination and Atrocities

- NCRB (2024) reports **50,900 caste-based crimes** including discrimination in schools, violence, and denial of access to public services.
- **Manual scavenging**, though banned under Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers Act (2013), persists with **₹500 crore** allocated for rehabilitation in 2025–26.
- **Only 12% of SC households** own land in rural India (MoRD 2024), perpetuating rural immobility.
- SC and ST households disproportionately engaged in low-wage, informal sector jobs.
- Class-based poverty overlaps with caste: 80% of urban poor in slums belong to marginalized castes (NSSO, 2024).

M2. Economic Exclusion and Inter-Generational Poverty

3. Institutional Barriers in Affirmative Action

- Backlog in reserved government jobs:
 - **29% shortfall in SC posts**, 22% in ST posts (DoPT Annual Report, 2025).
- **Private sector** has no mandatory reservation policy—exclusion continues in IT, banking, and manufacturing.
- **Quality of education** remains poor in SC/ST-dominated government schools due to teacher absenteeism and resource gaps.



IV. Official Suggestions and Structural Reforms

1. Policy Measures

- **Caste Census Release (2025)** must be followed by **real-time disaggregated policy planning**.

- Ensure **Special Component Plans (SCP) and Tribal Sub-Plans (TSP)** have separate heads and are monitored through **MIS-based portals**.
- Revise the **SC Sub-Plan Act (Telangana model)** into a national framework to guarantee legal allocation and expenditure of funds.

2. Committee Recommendations

- **Sinho Commission on OBC Reservation (2010)**: Recommended sub-categorization of OBCs to prevent elite capture.
- **Sachs Report on Dalit Inclusion (2006)**: Urged universal access to health, sanitation, and school infrastructure in Dalit-dominated areas.
- **Standing Committee on Social Justice (2024–25)**: Urged time-bound filling of backlog reserved posts and expansion of hostels for SC/ST students.

V. Best Practices and State Examples (2024–25)

- **Tamil Nadu's Adi Dravidar Welfare Department**: Introduced fully digital dashboards for scholarship disbursement with zero leakage.
- **Chhattisgarh's PESA Gram Sabhas**: Enabled tribal communities to control land, forest, and mineral use.
- **Rajasthan's Jan Adhikar Camps (2025)**: Provided caste certificate, domicile, EWS certificate to 8 lakh+ beneficiaries in three months.

VI. Real-World Case Studies

- **Bihar Caste Survey (2023–24)**: Triggered debates on deeper sub-categorization and representation gaps, especially among OBCs and EBCs (Extremely Backward Classes).
- **Karnataka's 'Beyond Reservation' Program (2024)**: Focused on entrepreneurship support, startup incubation, and mentorship to SC/ST youth outside of quota frameworks.
- **Jharkhand's Tribal Livelihood Missions (2024–25)**: Integrated MGNREGA with traditional forest-based livelihoods to boost income security for ST women.

VII. Conclusion

While India has a vast **architecture of social justice laws**, the **gap between policy intent and delivery** remains wide. For real empowerment, we must move beyond **quotas to capability-building, from token inclusion to structural transformation**. The path forward must include **community-led models, decentralised planning, and intersectional budgeting** to ensure that caste and class no longer determine a citizen's destiny.

Social empowerment, therefore, is not just about correcting historic wrongs—it is about constructing an **equitable and resilient India**.

Section 11: Education, Health, and Sanitation – Foundations of Social Transformation

“Social transformation begins where the weakest are empowered with knowledge, health, and dignity.”

In any society, education, health, and sanitation form the **core social infrastructure** that determines life outcomes across generations. In India, the push for **inclusive development** has elevated these three sectors as critical instruments of **empowerment and equity**. Yet, despite decades of intervention, gaps remain in terms of access, quality, and equity. The **Union Budget 2025–26** and flagship schemes reflect a growing realization that social justice is inseparable from these essential services.

I. Education as the Equalizer of Opportunity

Key Concepts

- Education is not just literacy; it is the means to build **critical thinking, economic mobility, and civic participation**.

- The **Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009**, and **National Education Policy (NEP), 2020** recognize this transformative potential.

Budget 2025–26 Provisions

- Total education sector allocation: **₹1.26 lakh crore** (highest ever).
- **PM SHRI Schools**: ₹10,000 crore allocated for 5,000 model schools with modern pedagogy and AI-based learning tools.
- **Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan**: ₹45,100 crore for universal school education with NEP alignment.
- **National Digital University (NDU)** launched to offer multilingual, low-cost degree programs using BharatNet.



Challenges

- **Foundational literacy crisis**: ASER 2024 shows that **only 53% of Grade 3 students** can read basic text.
- **Digital Divide**: Only **36% of rural children** have access to digital devices (MeitY 2024).
- **Dropout among marginalized groups**: ST girl dropout rate at secondary level is **17.2%**, SC boys at **14.6%** (U-DISE 2024).

Suggestions & Reforms

- Expand **NIPUN Bharat Mission** with real-time assessment tools.
- Reserve 25% of district budgets for tribal and EWS education via **Tribal Area Sub Plan (TASP)**.
- Mandatory **local language instruction** till Class 5 with AI-driven translation tools.



Best Practice

- **Delhi's Mission Buniyaad**: Bridge programs for foundational skills led to 30% literacy improvement in government schools (2024).
- **Jharkhand DigiPathshala**: Offline-first tablets distributed to over 2 lakh tribal students with solar chargers.

II. Health as a Public Good

Key Concepts

- Health is not merely the absence of disease but includes **mental, reproductive, nutritional, and social well-being**.
- **Ayushman Bharat, Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)**, and **PM-JAY** reflect India's movement toward **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**.

Budget 2025–26 Provisions

- **Total health allocation**: ₹92,500 crore (6% increase from last year).
- **Ayushman Bharat**: ₹12,900 crore including urban health pilot in 500 cities.
- **National Health Mission (NHM)**: ₹41,300 crore for maternal-child health, communicable diseases, and NCDs.
- Launch of **Jan Arogya Mitra Plus** for real-time health navigation support in PHCs and HWCs.



Challenges

- **Doctor-patient ratio**: 1:1500 vs. WHO norm of 1:1000, worse in tribal and rural blocks (Health Ministry 2025).

- **Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE):** Still accounts for **48% of total health spending**, disproportionately impacting poor.
- **Mental health gap:** 10 crore+ Indians suffer from diagnosable mental conditions, but fewer than **10,000 psychiatrists** available (MoHFW 2024–25).

Suggestions

- Scale up **telemedicine infrastructure** (eSanjeevani) with vernacular integration.
- Compulsory posting of medical interns in tribal blocks with skill-building incentives.
- Enact a **Public Health Services Guarantee Act** similar to Rajasthan's 2023 model.

Best Practice

- **Kerala's Family Health Centres:** Offer 24x7 services, e-pharmacy, and mental health counselling under one roof.
- **Sikkim Health Assurance Scheme (2024):** Extended to all senior citizens and transgender citizens without income proof.

III. Sanitation and Human Dignity

Key Concepts

- Sanitation includes **safe water, waste management, menstrual hygiene, and clean environment**—essential for dignity and disease prevention.
- Constitutionally linked to **Article 21 (Right to Life)** and **Article 47 (Duty of State to improve public health)**.

Budget 2025–26 Provisions

- **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM):** ₹73,000 crore for 100% rural tap water coverage by December 2025.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 (SBM-U & SBM-G):** ₹26,400 crore for faecal sludge, greywater, and solid waste management.
- Introduction of **Swachhata Digital Dashboard** to track toilet functionality, waste segregation, and menstrual hygiene facilities.

Challenges

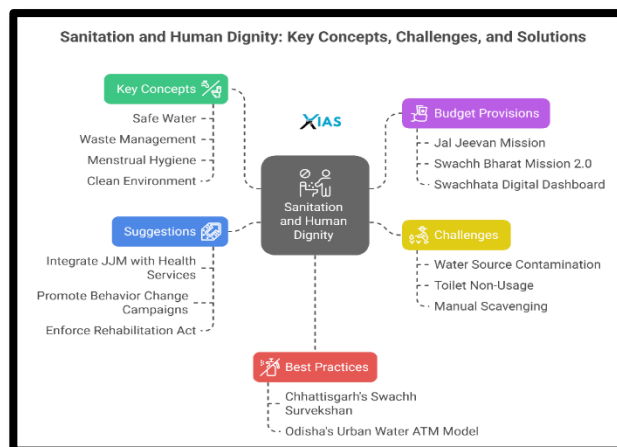
- **Water source contamination:** 13 states report fluoride/arsenic excess in rural water (CGWB 2025).
- **Toilet construction ≠ usage:** NSSO 2024 shows 17% non-usage in ODF-declared villages.
- **Manual scavenging still persists:** 586 deaths reported since 2018 (NCRB 2024), despite 2013 Act.

Suggestions

- Integrate JJM with rural health and Anganwadi services (for nutrition + hygiene).
- Promote **toilet behaviour change campaigns** in vernacular languages and local folk media.
- Update and enforce **Manual Scavengers Rehabilitation Act** with biometric tracking of safety gear and employment benefits.

Best Practice

- **Chhattisgarh's Swachh Survekshan (2024):** Graded rural sanitation on health impact, not just toilet count.
- **Odisha's Urban Water ATM Model:** Provided 24/7 clean water in slum clusters using prepaid smart cards.



IV. Conclusion

Education, health, and sanitation are not isolated services; they are the **tripod of human development** and essential to a just society. The 2025–26 budget lays a stronger foundation, but **delivery gaps, regional**

inequities, and systemic leakages must be addressed. Community engagement, decentralization, and tech-enabled transparency are the keys.

Social transformation will become a reality only when these three sectors are no longer seen as **subsidies**, but as **rights and investments** in India’s human capital and dignity.

Section 12: Role of Civil Society and NGOs in Social Transformation

“The conscience of a nation resides not just in laws but in the hands of those who serve beyond the realm of power.”

In a vast and diverse democracy like India, civil society acts as the **bridge between the state and society**, particularly the marginalized. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and Voluntary Organisations (VOs) collectively strengthen the **bottom-up fabric of democracy**, service delivery, and social reform. From mobilizing communities to monitoring governance, civil society has emerged as a **critical agent of social transformation**.

I. Understanding Civil Society and NGOs

- **Civil Society** refers to non-state, non-market organizations and institutions working towards public interest – including NGOs, religious groups, cooperatives, think tanks, and citizens’ collectives.
- **NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations)** are legally registered non-profit entities (under Societies Registration Act, Trust Act, or Section 8 of Companies Act) working in sectors like health, education, sanitation, disaster relief, and women’s empowerment.

II. Institutional and Legal Framework

- **FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) Amendment, 2020:** Restricts sub-granting and foreign funding unless FCRA registration is valid.
- **NITI Aayog NGO-DARPAN Portal:** Over **1.44 lakh NGOs** registered as of 2025 to ensure transparency and due diligence.
- **National Policy on Voluntary Sector (2007):** Encourages autonomy, innovation, and partnership with government.

NGO Regulatory Framework			
Characteristic	FCRA Amendment, 2020	NITI Aayog NGO-DARPAN Portal	National Policy on Voluntary Sector (2007)
Focus	Funding Regulations	Transparency	Sector Development
Key Aspect	Restricts sub-granting	1.44 Lakh NGOs registered	Encourages autonomy
Main Goal	Valid FCRA registration	Ensure due diligence	Partnership with government

III. Role in Social Transformation

1. Filling Governance Gaps

- NGOs like **SEWA (Self-Employed Women’s Association)** provide informal sector insurance and credit in urban Gujarat.
- During COVID-19 and Cyclone Michaung (2023), NGOs were instrumental in **relief logistics, health awareness**, and mental health support.

2. Empowering Marginalized Communities

- **PRADAN and Kudumbashree** helped **tribal and rural women** organize into micro-enterprises and SHGs in Odisha and Kerala.
- NGOs such as **Breakthrough** have run gender-sensitization campaigns across schools in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.

3. Advocating Rights and Legal Reform

- **Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)** pioneered the **Right to Information (RTI)** movement.
- NGOs like **CHRI (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative)** assist in **police reform** and custodial justice advocacy.

4. Innovation in Service Delivery

- **Aangan Trust** has trained over 10,000 community volunteers to report child abuse and unsafe migration.
- NGOs have developed **vernacular e-learning modules**, menstrual hygiene apps, and mobile health clinics in tribal areas.

IV. Budgetary and Institutional Support (2025–26)

- **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)**: ₹20,310 crore to promote SHGs and NGO partnerships for skill-building and financial inclusion.
- **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Monitoring Fund**: ₹1,500 crore to incentivize civil society partnerships in health, education, and climate change.
- **Volunteer Support Cells** to be established in all districts for structured community participation under **Mission Viksit Bharat @2047**.

V. Multi-Dimensional Challenges

1. Regulatory Constraints

- The FCRA restrictions post-2020 led to cancellation of **6,600+ NGO licenses**, affecting access to foreign funding for health and education projects.
- **State-level overregulation** leads to delays in NGO registration and project clearances.

2. Trust Deficit and Lack of Transparency

- Allegations of fund misuse and ideological bias create a **credibility gap**.
- Only **12% of registered NGOs** submit annual financial disclosures on DARPAN (as of NITI Aayog report 2024).

3. Urban-Rural Disparity

- NGO concentration is higher in **urban districts and metros**, while **Aspirational Districts** remain under-served.
- Limited NGO presence in Naxal-affected and border regions due to **security restrictions** and inadequate capacity.

VI. Suggestions and Reforms

A. Government Initiatives

- **National Capacity Building Fund for NGOs**: Launch training in FCRA compliance, digital governance, and impact evaluation.
- Ensure **fast-track clearances** for NGOs working in disaster relief and Aspirational Districts.

B. Committee Recommendations

- **Second ARC Report on Social Capital (2008)**: Advocated for structured NGO-State partnerships at the Panchayat level and social audit facilitation.
- **NITI Aayog's 3-Year Action Agenda**: Urged formation of a **National Accreditation Council** to regulate, support, and rate NGOs based on transparency and impact.

C. Best Practices

- **Andhra Pradesh Social Audit Units** (under MGNREGA): Independent SHG-led audits institutionalized by the state government in partnership with NGOs.
- **CSOs in Tamil Nadu's Sanitation Mission**: Collaborated with ULBs to drive behavioural change in slum sanitation under SBM-U 2.0.

VII. Conclusion

The transformation of Indian society must move beyond top-down policies. **NGOs and civil society actors serve as social innovators, watchdogs, and agents of inclusion.** Budgetary recognition, legal space, and institutional trust are essential for scaling their impact. India's vision of **Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka**

Vishwas, Sabka Prayas will remain incomplete without structured civil society participation in governance and development.

Conclusion: Indian Society – A Mosaic of Unity and Strength

“India is not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic – each piece unique, yet part of a united whole.”

The Indian society, rooted in a civilizational continuum, thrives on a delicate balance of **tradition and transformation**. Its salient features—ranging from **caste and kinship, family and pluralism**, to **rural-urban linkages**—reflect a deep social fabric that is both ancient and adaptive. Simultaneously, the **diversity of India**—cultural, linguistic, religious, ecological—is not merely a characteristic, but a dynamic force shaping every institution, movement, and interaction in the country.

However, managing this diversity and stratification demands persistent efforts toward **inclusiveness, equity, and harmony**. The rise of communalism, regionalism, and identity-based politics poses challenges, but they are countered by the robust institutional safeguards enshrined in our **Constitution**, a vibrant **civil society**, and a deeply rooted culture of **tolerance and coexistence**.

In the 21st century, as India aspires to become a global leader, the strength of its society will lie in its **ability to transform diversity into opportunity**, and social plurality into a model of peaceful development. True empowerment will be achieved when **social capital and human dignity** are upheld across all sections, fostering a society that is **just, pluralistic, and future-ready**.

Keywords

Mosaic Society-A society composed of various distinct cultural groups that coexist while retaining their individual identities—like India’s pluralism. **Melting Pot**-A metaphor for a homogeneous society formed by merging different cultures into one, often applied to the USA. **Salad Bowl Model**-A society where diverse identities coexist but remain culturally distinct—each part contributing uniquely to the whole. **Syncretism**-The blending of different religious or cultural traditions into a new, unified practice—e.g., Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb. **Pluralism**-The peaceful coexistence of multiple groups with equal status and institutional accommodation—seen in Indian secular democracy. **Cultural Lag**-A situation where social norms fail to keep up with technological or economic changes—visible in India’s gender equality transition. **Community Orientation**-Emphasis on group goals and social roles rather than individual aspirations—common in Indian familial and caste structures. **Contractual Society**-A Western model where relationships (even family or state-citizen) are based on formal contracts rather than inherited roles. **Constitutional Morality**-Upholding the spirit and values of the Constitution over personal or cultural beliefs—highlighted by the Indian judiciary. **Social Stratification**-The hierarchical arrangement of individuals into social layers—caste in India, class in the West. **Occupational Mobility**-The ability to change social or economic status through education or work—more restricted in India due to caste legacy. **Cultural Hybridisation**-The fusion of traditional and modern, local and global values—seen in Indian urban youth culture. **Kinship Networks**-Family-based social structures that influence decisions from marriage to politics—strong in India. **Urban Anomie**-Social instability due to breakdown of norms—common in fast-urbanising societies without support systems. **Identity Assertion**-Rise of cultural or regional identity-based movements—like Dravidian identity in Tamil Nadu or tribal rights movements in Northeast.

Model Mains Question

Q. "Indian society cannot be classified as a melting pot but rather as a mosaic of cultures." Discuss this in comparison with Western societal models. (250 words)

Answer Writing Strategy**Introduction:**

Begin with a conceptual quote or definition—explain what “melting pot” and “mosaic” mean and frame India’s unique model in contrast to the West.

Body:

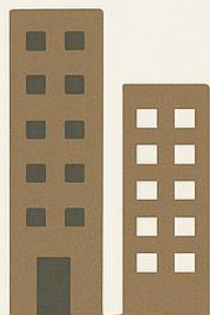
- **Para 1:** Define and differentiate key models—Melting Pot, Mosaic, Salad Bowl.
- **Para 2:** Explain Indian society’s features—pluralism, diversity, caste, family, religion.
- **Para 3:** Contrast with Western society—individualism, contractual ties, secularism.
- **Para 4:** Give examples—constitutional provisions (Article 29–30), federal structure, urban hybrid culture.
- **Para 5:** Mention challenges—cultural conflicts, social stratification, caste rigidity.

Conclusion:

End with a positive note on India’s ability to harmonise diversity and suggest that its mosaic model, if supported with equity and justice, can be a global example of cultural coexistence.



ROLE OF WOMEN AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION, POPULATION AND ASSOCIATED ISSUES, POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES, URBANIZATION, THEIR PROBLEMS AND THEIR REMEDIES



TOPIC-8-Role Of Women And Women's Organization, Population And Associated Issues, Poverty And Developmental Issues, Urbanization, Their Problems And Their Remedies.

Section 1: From Revered to Resilient – The Evolutionary Path of Indian Women

“The strength of a civilization is measured by how it treats its women across centuries.”

India's social and cultural evolution can be mapped by tracing the changing position of women across time. From the Vedic seers who shaped metaphysical debates to the grassroots leaders of SHGs (Self-Help Groups) today, Indian women have journeyed through reverence, marginalization, resurgence, and resilience. Their changing roles have been closely linked with religious ideologies, socio-political structures, colonial encounters, and constitutional reforms.

1. The Vedic Phase – Spiritual and Social Parity

- Women were **intellectually and ritually empowered**, participating in yajnas, philosophical dialogues, and education.
- Thinkers like **Gargi Vachaknavi** and **Maitreyi** were respected Vedic scholars.
- They had access to **stridhana** (woman's property) and were not socially excluded.

2. The Epic and Later Vedic Period – Decline through Ritualism

- Brahmanical texts such as **Manusmriti** institutionalized patriarchy.
- Practices like **child marriage**, **denial of education**, and **widow seclusion** gained prominence.
- Women's status became **linked with male honor**, shrinking their autonomy.

3. Medieval Era – Suppression and Symbolism

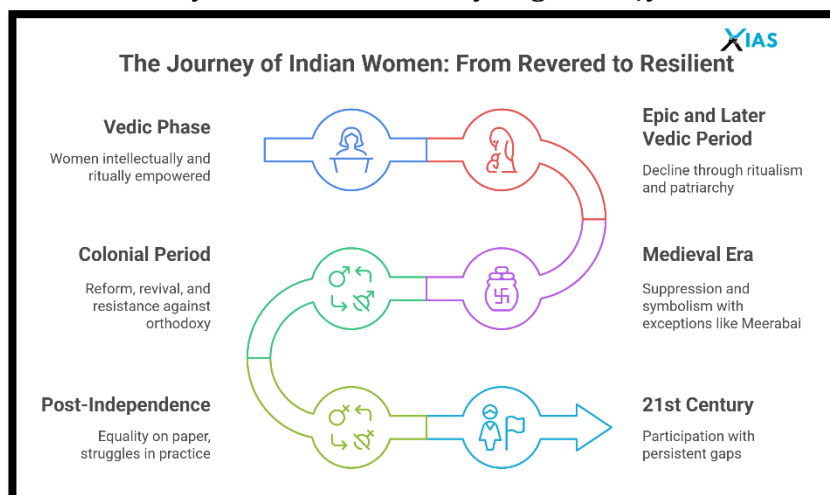
- Social instability, invasions, and feudalism led to **purdah**, **sati**, and **honor-based gender roles**.
- Education and mobility were restricted; **women were idealized but disempowered**.
- Exceptions: Bhakti saints like **Meerabai** and **Akka Mahadevi** challenged these norms through spiritual rebellion.

4. Colonial Period – Reform, Revival, and Resistance

- Social reformers like **Raja Ram Mohan Roy**, **Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar**, and **Jyotirao Phule** challenged orthodoxy.
- Movements against **sati**, for **widow remarriage**, and **female education** gained traction.
- Early women's groups like **Bharat Stree Mahamandal (1910)** marked the beginning of **organized women's activism**.

5. Post-Independence – Equality on Paper, Struggles in Practice

- **Constitutional Provisions:**
 - **Article 14:** Right to equality
 - **Article 15(3):** State can make special provisions for women
 - **Article 16:** Equal opportunity in public employment



- **Hindu Code Bills (1955–56)** granted women rights in **inheritance, divorce, and guardianship**.
- Grassroots activism surged through **Mahila Mandals, Kudumbashree (Kerala), and SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association)**.

6. 21st Century – Participation with Persistent Gaps

- **Women in Governance:** Over **14 lakh women representatives in Panchayati Raj**, due to 33% reservation.
- **STEM participation:** Women contributed significantly in **ISRO's Chandrayaan-3, Gaganyaan mission**.
- Rise of **digital feminism:** #MeTooIndia, Pink Chaddi Campaign, online petitions for workplace safety.
- Yet challenges remain: **workforce participation (below 25%), gender pay gap, and patriarchal backlash**.

Conceptual Analysis

The trajectory of Indian women's status shows that **social reform often precedes legal reform, and legal guarantees do not automatically change societal attitudes**. The struggle is not just about **equality of opportunity**, but also **equality of access, agency, and outcome**. Each era shaped the gender contract differently—**patriarchal control gave way to protective legislation, but not always to actual empowerment**.

Conclusion: The Unfinished Revolution

The Indian woman stands today as a paradox—**more visible, yet invisibly constrained; empowered by law, but often disempowered in life**. True transformation lies not merely in constitutional promises but in **changing social mindsets** and ensuring **institutional accountability**. The history of Indian womanhood is not just of struggle, but of **quiet strength, reformist leadership, and transformative hope**.

Section 2: Women's Role in Social, Economic, Political, and Cultural Spheres in Contemporary India

"A nation's progress is no greater than the empowerment of its women—be it in households, markets, or Parliament."

The role of Indian women today reflects both achievement and asymmetry. While constitutional guarantees, expanding education, and market reforms have brought women into the mainstream, their participation across social, economic, political, and cultural domains continues to face structural resistance. This section analyses how women contribute meaningfully to nation-building across these spheres, and why these contributions still demand systemic reinforcement.

1. Social Sphere – Anchors of Grassroots Transformation

In rural and semi-urban India, women form the backbone of community-level initiatives. More than **1 crore women** are currently engaged in Self Help Groups (SHGs) under **DAY-NRLM (Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission)**. These groups have enhanced access to credit, nutrition, and healthcare through collective action.

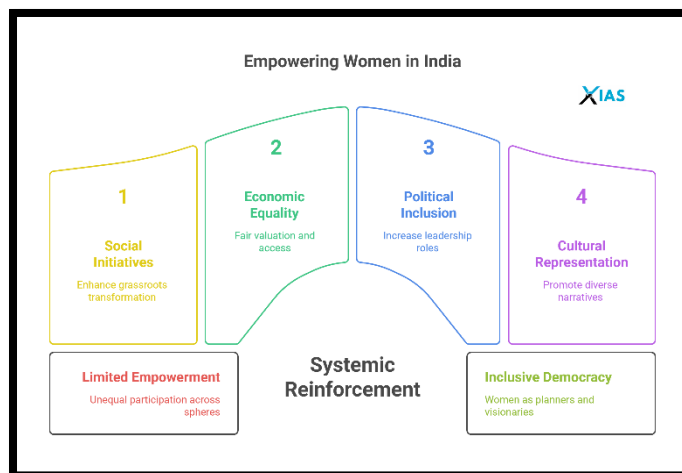
- Women ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activists) workers played a critical role during the COVID-19 pandemic, conducting door-to-door surveillance and vaccination drives in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh.
- Mothers' committees under **Poshan Abhiyan** actively monitor nutrition delivery to children and adolescent girls.

Despite these contributions, issues like **social mobility restrictions**, honor-based violence, and care burden inhibit their autonomy.

2. Economic Sphere – Visible Contributors, Invisible Valuation

Women contribute significantly to agriculture and informal labour, yet their work remains undervalued and underpaid. Over **73% of female workforce** in India is concentrated in the informal sector without social security, according to the **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2023–24**.

- In states like Odisha and Maharashtra, women-run **Producer Groups** have led successful ventures in millet farming and dairy cooperatives, respectively, improving family incomes and nutrition outcomes.
- The government's **PM Vishwakarma Yojana**, though primarily focused on traditional crafts, has seen growing enrolment of women artisans, especially from SC/ST households in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.



However, low digital access, gendered wage gaps, and poor asset ownership continue to act as economic barriers.

3. Political Sphere – Participatory Gains, Leadership Gaps

Women's political participation at the grassroots has surged. **Over 46% of elected representatives in Gram Panchayats are women**, often outperforming male counterparts in sanitation, education, and grievance redressal.

- In Kerala's Kudumbashree model, women leaders have not only spearheaded local planning but also contested State Assembly elections successfully.
- The passage of the **128th Constitutional Amendment Bill (2023)** mandating 33% reservation for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies represents a structural breakthrough.

Yet in Parliament, as of 2024, women still hold only around **15% of seats**. Cultural biases, lack of party ticket distribution, and tokenism in candidacy remain concerns.

4. Cultural Sphere – Shaping Narratives and Social Change

Women today are emerging as narrators, disruptors, and cultural icons across literature, film, digital spaces, and social reform.

- Authors like **Arundhati Roy**, filmmakers like **Meghna Gulzar**, and social media influencers on gender issues have expanded India's socio-cultural dialogue.
- The **#MeTooIndia movement**, led by artists and journalists, triggered internal gender audits in major media houses and brought sexual harassment at workplaces under sharper scrutiny.

However, commodification of female identity in advertising, unequal representation in film production, and regressive content in regional cinema counteract these gains.

Conclusion

Women's contribution to India's transformation is deep but often unrecognized, and systemic hurdles limit their upward mobility despite legal equality. Ensuring that women are not just **participants but planners**, not just **voters but visionaries**, is vital to achieving a truly inclusive democracy and economy. Empowering them across every sphere is not just a matter of equity—it is the engine of development.

Section 3: Role and Impact of Women's Organizations in India

“When women organize, transformation follows across households, policies, and generations.”

Women's organizations in India have evolved from informal collectives to structured institutions shaping laws, rights, and social consciousness. These bodies are more than pressure groups they are agents of social justice, welfare delivery, crisis intervention, and ideological shift. From grassroots to global forums, they have amplified women's voices in policy and praxis.

1. Evolution of Women's Movements into Organizations

- The **early 20th-century social reform phase** saw formation of organizations like the *All-India Women's Conference (AIWC)* (1927), which worked on child marriage abolition and female literacy.
- Post-independence, many groups shifted from social reform to **rights-based and feminist approaches**, particularly after the **Mathura custodial rape case (1972)**, which led to the formation of collectives such as *Forum Against Rape*.
- In the 1990s and post-liberalization era, organizations began working on **intersectional issues** economic inequality, domestic violence, health, education, and political representation.

2. Functional Domains of Women's Organizations

a. Legal and Rights Advocacy

- *Majlis Legal Centre (Mumbai)* provides legal aid to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. It played a key role in the implementation of the **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005)**.
- *Sakhi One Stop Centres*, set up under the **Ministry of Women & Child**

Development, are institutionalized versions of grassroots intervention hubs for women in distress.

b. Livelihood and Economic Empowerment

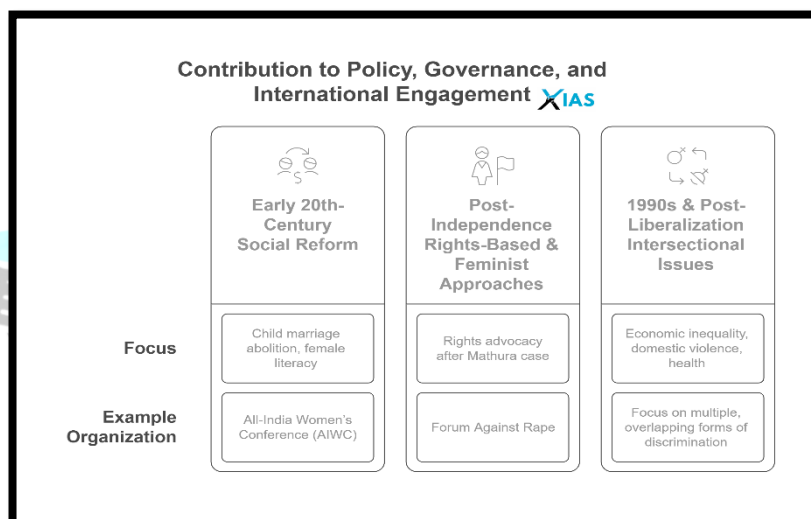
- *SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association)* in Gujarat supports over 1.5 million informal women workers with training, microfinance, and insurance.
- *Working Women's Forum (Tamil Nadu)* assists poor women in accessing credit and organizing into cooperatives, reducing dependency on exploitative moneylenders.

c. Health and Reproductive Rights

- *Sama Resource Group for Women and Health* campaigns for women's health rights and critiques gender bias in public health policy.
- Several organizations contributed to shaping India's position on **access to sanitary products**, prompting GST exemption on sanitary napkins in 2018.

d. Disaster Relief and Conflict Response

- *North East Network* works in Assam and Nagaland for conflict-affected women and has set up **shelters, legal aid cells, and counselling centres** post-ethnic clashes.



3. Contribution to Policy, Governance, and International Engagement

- Women's groups were instrumental in lobbying for the **Nirbhaya Fund (2013)** and the strengthening of IPC (Indian Penal Code) sections on sexual assault post the **Justice Verma Committee** recommendations.
- *National Alliance of Women (NAWO)* represents India at UN-CSW (Commission on the Status of Women), ensuring that gender equality in India stays on the global agenda.
- Organizations have contributed policy inputs to **National Policy for Women (2016 draft)** and **National Education Policy 2020** on gender inclusion.

Conclusion

Women's organizations in India represent the bridge between policy and people, between the law on paper and justice on the ground. They embody the collective conscience of India's gender justice movement. Strengthening them is not a favor to women—it is an investment in social harmony, inclusive governance, and grassroots democracy.

Challenges, Suggestions, and Best Practices for Women's Organizations in India

I. Challenges Faced by Women's Organizations

1. Shrinking Financial Autonomy

- **FCRA Restrictions:** The **Foreign Contribution Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2020** imposed tighter controls on foreign donations, affecting grassroots NGOs like *Jagori*, *Sakhi*, and *NEN*.
- **Dependence on Project-Based Funding:** Many organizations function on short-term grants, leading to discontinuity in long-term advocacy or rehabilitation projects.

2. Urban-Centric Reach and Rural Inaccessibility

- The majority of large and influential women's NGOs are concentrated in urban areas. In **Bihar and Uttar Pradesh**, weaker organizational presence limits rural outreach.
- Language, caste, and tribal customs often hinder community trust and engagement with external NGOs.

3. Safety and Legal Threats

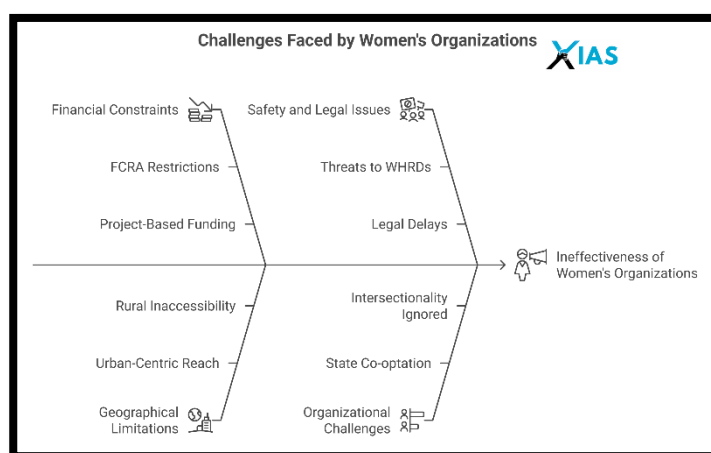
- **Women human rights defenders (WHRDs)** face threats, especially in **conflict zones (Chhattisgarh, Manipur)** or in **land rights movements**.
- Delay in police action and lack of legal immunity discourage field activism, as seen during protests against evictions in tribal belts.

4. State Co-optation and Loss of Autonomy

- With the institutionalization of roles (e.g., appointment in *One Stop Centres*), many NGOs are being absorbed into government programs, reducing their independent voice in policy critique.

5. Intersectionality Ignored

- Many organizations still follow **top-down approaches** that fail to fully understand and represent issues of **Dalit, tribal, LGBTQ+, or disabled women**.
- Issues like **menstrual equity, mental health, and gender-based climate impact** remain inadequately addressed in traditional platforms.



6. Monitoring and Accountability Gaps

- Limited third-party evaluation of NGO effectiveness leads to **funding wastage**, and lack of feedback loops from beneficiaries' limits learning.

II. Suggestions and Structural Reforms

1. Institutional Support and Capacity Building

- Launch a **National Fund for Women's Organizations**, managed under the Ministry of Women & Child Development, with transparent, multi-year grants.
- Set up **district-level Women's NGO Facilitation Cells** to support local partnerships with SHGs, PRIs, and schools.

2. Legal and Operational Reforms

- Ensure **legal immunity provisions for WHRDs** and fast-track courts for harassment cases involving NGO workers, especially in tribal zones.
- Amend **Section 12 of FCRA** to allow compliance-based exemption for well-established grassroots women's groups.

3. Promote Inclusion and Diversity

- Make it mandatory for State Gender Planning Units to include at least **one representative from SC/ST, minority, and LGBTQ+ organizations** in every gender policy drafting committee.
- Include women's groups in climate action policy, especially around forest rights, water management, and disaster relief.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks

- Partner with academic institutions like **TISS (Tata Institute of Social Sciences)** and **NIPCCD (National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development)** for real-time assessment of impact and capacity-building.

5. Digital Literacy and E-Participation

- Provide grants for **women's NGO-led digital platforms** in local languages for legal awareness, complaint redressal, and resource mapping.
- Develop a **National Repository of Women's Legal Rights** translated into 22 languages for capacity-building of field workers.

III. Best Practices: India and Global

1. Kudumbashree Model – Kerala

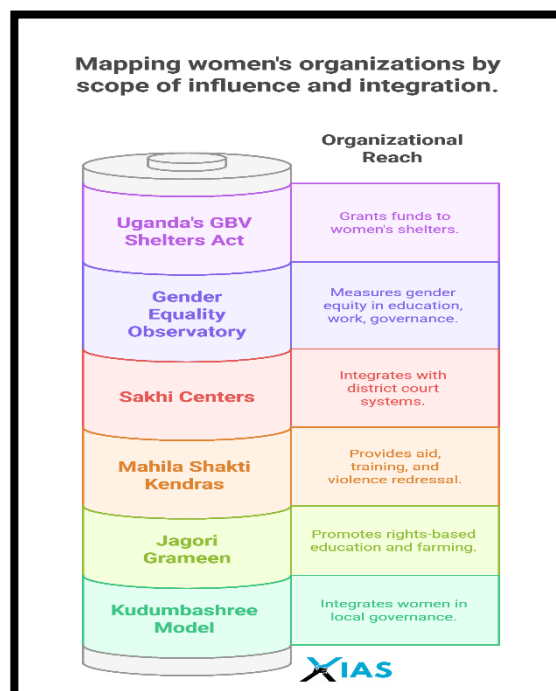
- Integrated women's collectives with local governance since 1998.
- Over **45 lakh members**, contributing to panchayat-level planning, poverty reduction, and disaster response.

2. Jagori Grameen – Himachal Pradesh

- Promotes rights-based education, collective farming by women, legal literacy, and male sensitization workshops.
- Successfully collaborated with local courts and schools on anti-child marriage campaigns.

3. Mahila Shakti Kendras – India

- Centrally sponsored scheme with local women workers providing support for legal



aid, vocational training, and violence redressal in 640 districts.

4. Uganda's GBV Shelters Act (2020) – Global Benchmark

- Grants legal status and central government funds to all certified women's shelters.
- India can adapt a similar model for integrating **Sakhi centres** with district court systems.

5. Spain's Observatorio de Igualdad (Gender Equality Observatory)

- An institutional mechanism to measure gender equity in education, work, and governance. India can replicate this for real-time gender impact auditing.

Conclusion

Women's organizations are not just social actors—they are custodians of India's grassroots democracy and gender justice architecture. Ensuring their security, autonomy, financial stability, and legal recognition is not merely policy reform—it is national necessity. A stronger network of capable, inclusive, and independent women's organizations can transform not just lives, but the very nature of Indian democracy.

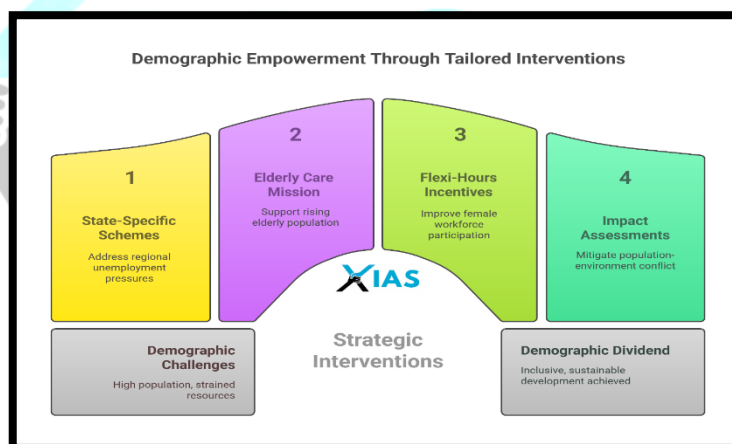
Section 4: Population and Associated Issues – Demography as Destiny or Challenge?

“A population is not a problem to be solved—it is potential to be unlocked.”

India, with over **1.44 billion people as of 2024** (UN DESA), stands as the most populous nation globally, overtaking China. While this demographic weight presents economic potential, it simultaneously reveals challenges in terms of **employment, resource pressure, urban congestion, education, and healthcare delivery**. Population is thus both a driver and a drag—depending on how we manage its dynamics.

1. Key Demographic Trends in India (2024–25)

- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** (as per NFHS-5, 2023): **2.0**, below replacement level, but regional variations exist (e.g., Bihar TFR – 2.8; Tamil Nadu – 1.6).
- **Population Growth Rate** declining at **1.0% annually**, but **absolute burden remains high** due to population momentum.
- **Youth Bulge**: Over **52% of Indians are below age 30** (NITI Aayog 2024), presenting both a workforce advantage and employment crisis.
- **Rising Elderly Population**: By 2036, **20% of the population will be above 60** (MoHFW, Elderly Report 2024).



2. Major Issues Related to Population

a. Uneven Demographic Transition

- Northern states like **Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh** are still in Stage 2 or early Stage 3 of demographic transition.
- Southern and North-Eastern states are seeing population stabilisation, creating **demographic asymmetry** in federal planning and representation.

b. Strain on Public Services

- Overcrowded urban areas (e.g., **Delhi, Mumbai**) face massive demand on sanitation, water, housing, and transport infrastructure.

- Rural healthcare systems in **tribal Jharkhand and Odisha** remain overstretched with poor doctor-patient ratios and low institutional deliveries.

c. Unemployment and Underemployment

- Over **32% of youth (age 15–29)** are NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) as per **PLFS 2023–24**.
- Skilling gaps persist, with only **27% formally trained youth** as of 2024 (MSDE Annual Report).

d. Migration and Urban Informality

- Inter-state migration is rising due to rural distress and climate change (e.g., **Bundelkhand to Delhi migration**).
- Migrant workers face exclusion from **ration cards, health services**, and voting rights in destination states.

3. Government Measures and Policy Responses

- **Population Stabilization Fund (2023–24)** under **MoHFW (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare)** now supports district-level IEC campaigns.
- **National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)** ensures portability and tracking of health services, especially for migrants.
- **PM-SHRI Urban Housing Yojana** extended to 2026 to cater to urban influx.
- **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)** scheme has improved food security for 93 crore beneficiaries including migrants (as per 2024 data).

4. Challenges and Suggestions

Challenge 1: Youth Demographic Imbalance

- *Issue:* Rising youth population in less developed states leads to regional unemployment pressures.
- *Example:* **Bihar and UP contribute 29% of India's population but receive only 15% of skilling budget** (MoLE, 2024).
- *Suggestion:* Introduce **state-specific demographic dividend schemes**, and expand **Skill India Digital Platform** with regional languages and local job-linkages.

Challenge 2: Ageing Without Support

- *Issue:* Rise in elderly, especially in Kerala, Maharashtra, and Himachal Pradesh, without adequate old-age homes or health insurance.
- *Suggestion:* Implement **Elderly Care Mission 2040** proposed by NITI Aayog, focusing on geriatric training in primary health centers and subsidized insurance plans.

Challenge 3: Female Workforce Dropout

- *Issue:* **Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR)** dropped to **19.6% in 2023** (CMIE), mostly due to unpaid care and informalization.
- *Suggestion:* Incentivize **flexi-hours, hybrid work**, and **crèche facilities in MSMEs**; adopt models like **Iceland's equal parenting leave policy**.

Challenge 4: Population-Environment Conflict

- *Example:* Cities like **Bangalore** and **Guwahati** have lost 45% of green cover due to urban sprawl.
- *Suggestion:* Introduce **Population-Environment Impact Assessments (PEIA)** before urban zoning changes, as piloted in **Germany's Leipzig Charter**.

5. Best Practices (India + Global)

- **Sambal Yojana (Madhya Pradesh):** Offers maternity, nutrition, and skilling support to poor women, curbing fertility rates and improving maternal health.
- **Kerala's Age-Friendly Panchayats:** Focus on participatory planning for elderly care, replicable across other ageing states.
- **Rajasthan's Jan Sochna Portal:** Ensures transparency of welfare schemes to reduce exclusion error among poor and migrant populations.
- **Bangladesh's Family Planning Success:** Relied on female frontline health workers and door-to-door contraceptive access—model for Indian hinterland.

Conclusion

Population is not India's burden—it is India's opportunity. But to convert it into a true dividend, governance must shift from demographic control to **demographic empowerment**. With tailored interventions in health, skilling, urban planning, and social protection, India's population can become the strongest pillar of its **inclusive and sustainable development**.

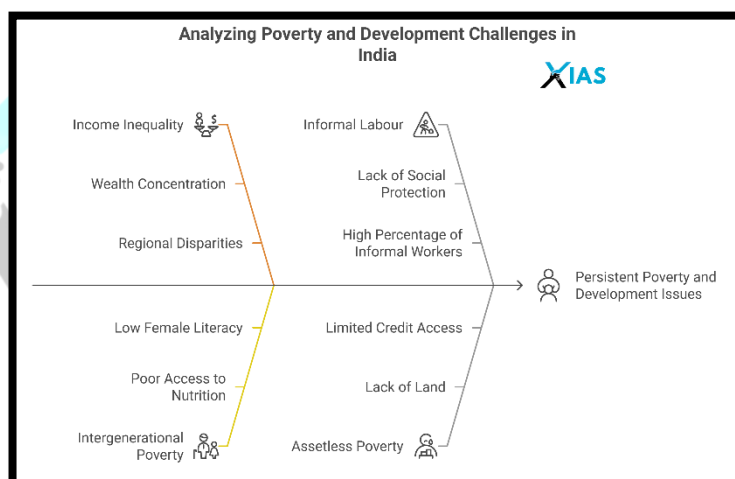
Section 5: Poverty and Developmental Issues – The Paradox of Progress

“Poverty is not just lack of income, but the denial of dignity, opportunity, and participation.”

While India has made remarkable strides in GDP growth and technological advancement, pockets of deprivation persist across social and regional lines. Poverty in India is deeply **multi-dimensional**, intersecting with caste, gender, geography, education, and access to public goods. True development must aim not just at income growth, but at **capability enhancement and dignity-based inclusion**.

1. Poverty: Status and Trends in India (2024–25)

- Headcount Poverty (as per NITI Aayog's Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023):**
 Reduced from **24.85% in 2015–16 to 14.96% in 2019–21**, translating to 135 million people escaping poverty.
 However, **rural poverty (19.28%)** remains significantly higher than urban poverty (5.27%).
- Monetary Poverty:**
 No official poverty line post-Tendulkar Committee (2011), but recent internal analysis by **NSSO 2023** suggests **~20 crore Indians** still live below an adjusted poverty threshold of ₹1,200 per capita per month (rural).
- Chronic Deprivation:**
Tribals (STs), Dalits (SCs), landless labourers, and female-headed households show persistent multi-deprivation.



2. Core Issues Associated with Poverty and Development

a. Income Inequality

- Top 10% hold 77% of India's wealth** (World Inequality Report 2022).
- Urban prosperity hides rural and regional disparity: **Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and UP** remain backward on HDI indicators.

b. Intergenerational Poverty Trap

- Poor access to **nutrition, quality education, healthcare** in childhood continues the poverty cycle.
- In **Bundelkhand**, low child nutrition and female literacy reinforce long-term deprivation.

c. Informalisation of Labour

- Over **85% of India's workforce is in the informal sector**, with no access to social protection, as per **MoLE 2024**.

d. Assetless Poverty

- Majority of rural poor lack **land, livestock, or credit access**. SC and ST groups are more vulnerable.
- **Credit penetration among landless SCs** is only 7% (NABARD, 2024).

e. Developmental Blind Spots

- Welfare schemes often miss nomadic tribes, migrant labourers, and urban homeless due to lack of **digital/identity access**.

3. Major Challenges in Tackling Poverty

Challenge 1: Fragmented Welfare Architecture

- Too many schemes (over 500+), leading to duplication, inefficiency, and leakages.
- *Example:* A woman in rural Odisha might receive a pension under NSAP but get excluded from housing under PMAY due to Aadhaar mismatch.

Suggestion: Implement a **Unified Social Registry** (as recommended by Economic Survey 2021–22) to integrate welfare databases.

Challenge 2: Ineffective Targeting

- High **inclusion and exclusion errors** in PDS (Public Distribution System) and PM-KISAN.
- 2024 SECC-Update still pending, causing outdated targeting.

Suggestion: Use **real-time Aadhaar-linked dynamic database + AI-powered welfare mapping** for last-mile inclusion.

Challenge 3: Rising Urban Poverty and Homelessness

- Post-COVID urban poor lack job security, affordable housing, and healthcare access.
- 2024 data shows **over 3 million urban homeless** (MoHUA report, Jan 2025).

Suggestion: Accelerate **Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHC)** under **PMAY-U**, especially for migrants and gig workers.

Challenge 4: Regional Imbalances in Development

- *Example:* In 2024, **Uttar Pradesh** received only 4.5% of MSME credit disbursements despite being home to 16% of India's population.

Suggestion: Operationalise **Aspirational District Programme 2.0** with focused budget tracking, outcome-based dashboards, and **cluster-based development models**.

4. Government Policies and Schemes (2024–25 Updates)

- **PM-Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana** (extended in Budget 2025–26): Free food grains to over **80 crore beneficiaries** under NFSA.
- **PM-Vishwakarma Yojana** (2023): Provides training and credit access to 18 traditional artisan communities.
- **PM-SURAJ Portal (2025)**: New initiative to unify subsidy transfer for Scheduled Castes under one platform.
- **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)**: Covers old age, widows, and disabled — being revamped in FY 2025–26 for real-time Aadhaar integration.

5. Best Practices

India

- **Odisha's PEETHA initiative:** A grassroots IEC campaign that bridges awareness gaps in rural areas about government schemes.
- **Kerala's Kudumbashree:** Women-led poverty alleviation model with over 45 lakh members managing microfinance, nutrition kitchens, and crisis support.

Global

- **Brazil's Bolsa Família (now Auxílio Brasil):** Conditional cash transfer tied to school attendance and healthcare—reduced poverty by 27% over 5 years.
- **Rwanda's Ubudehe System:** Community-driven categorization of poor households for targeted service delivery—promotes dignity and community ownership.

6. Committee Recommendations

- **Rangarajan Committee (2014):** Redefined poverty line to include spending on health and education.
- **NITI Aayog's Strategy for New India @75:** Emphasized **rural infrastructure, digital literacy, and direct benefit transfers** as poverty reducers.
- **World Bank Report 2023:** Advised India to shift from subsidy-based models to **"capability-based empowerment"**, especially in poor-performing tribal districts.

Poverty Challenges, Solutions, and Examples 				
Characteristic	Fragmented Welfare	Ineffective Targeting	Rising Urban Poverty	Regional Imbalances
 Challenge	Duplication and leakages	Inclusion/exclusion errors in key programs	Lack of job security and housing	Uneven credit access across regions
 Suggestion	Unified Social Registry	Real-time Aadhaar-linked database	Affordable Rental Housing Complexes	Aspirational District Programme 2.0
 Example	Exclusion from housing due to mismatch	Pending SECC update causes outdated targeting	Over 3 million urban homeless	Uttar Pradesh receives low MSME credit

Conclusion

Poverty alleviation in India must move beyond food and income transfers. It must aim at building **resilience, capabilities, and dignity**. What India needs is not more schemes, but smarter, targeted, and citizen-centric implementation. In the age of Digital India, true poverty elimination will come only with **data-driven governance, inclusive policies, and local participation**.

Section 6: Urbanization in India – Challenges and Remedies for Equitable Urban Futures

"India is no longer rural versus urban—it is both, and rapidly becoming more urban in aspiration if not infrastructure."

Urbanization in India reflects a dynamic transition from agrarian settlements to industrial and service-centric cityscapes. However, this transition has been accompanied by numerous challenges—unplanned growth, infrastructure deficits, migration overload, housing crises, and rising inequalities. Effective urbanization must be inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.

1. Urbanization in India: Current Trends and Drivers

- As per **Census 2011**, **31.1%** of India's population was urban.
- **UN World Urbanization Prospects (2024)** estimates **India's urban population to cross 40% by 2030 and 50% by 2047**.
- Key drivers: **rural-urban migration, reclassification of rural areas, natural population growth, and urban sprawl**.

2. Major Issues and Challenges of Urbanization

a. Unplanned Urban Growth and Slum Expansion

- Over **65 million Indians live in slums** (NCRB & MoHUA, 2024).
- *Example:* Dharavi in Mumbai, Asia's largest slum, faces issues of waste, disease, and informal economy exploitation.

Suggestion: Use **Geospatial mapping and satellite-based urban planning** as done in Hyderabad's slum redevelopment blueprint (2023).

b. Inadequate Urban Infrastructure

- Urban India requires an investment of **₹39 lakh crore over 20 years** for basic infrastructure (MoHUA, 2023).
- *Example:* Bengaluru's 2024 floods exposed drainage and road planning failures.

Suggestion: Implement **Urban Local Body (ULB) Reforms** for better financial autonomy and promote **Area-Based Development** under **Smart Cities Mission**.

c. Traffic Congestion and Air Pollution

- Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru rank among the **top 10 most congested cities globally** (TomTom Traffic Index 2024).
- Vehicular emissions, poor public transport, and unregulated construction worsen **PM 2.5** levels.

Suggestion: Promote **Mass Rapid Transit Systems (MRTS)** like **Metro Rail** and **BRT corridors**, along with **National Electric Bus Mission (2024)**.

d. Affordable Housing Crisis

- **Urban housing shortage (2024)** stands at **~18.8 million units**, mostly affecting EWS (Economically Weaker Sections).
- *Example:* Delhi NCR's real estate boom has priced out low-income families.

Suggestion: Expand **PMAY-U (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban)** with rental vouchers and land pooling as in the **Ahmedabad model**.

e. Urban Governance Deficit

- 74th Amendment mandates devolution to ULBs, but **only 17 out of 28 states** have devolved all 18 functions (MoPR 2024).
- Weak accountability in municipal corporations hinders city management.

Suggestion: Institutionalize **Mayoral Governance Model** with fixed tenures, local budgeting, and accountability (Delhi Model Committee Proposal, 2023).

3. Sector-Specific Developmental Gaps

Water and Sanitation

- Only **35% urban households have piped water supply**; sewage treatment covers **just 38%** (Jal Jeevan Mission, 2025).
- Poor sanitation leads to urban diseases like dengue, typhoid, and diarrhoea.

Solid Waste Management

- Cities generate **~1.50 lakh tonnes/day** of waste. Only 32% is scientifically processed (CPCB 2025).
- *Example:* Ghazipur landfill (Delhi) now taller than Qutub Minar.

4. Government Initiatives and Budget 2025-26 Updates

- **Smart Cities Mission:** ₹16,000 crore released till 2025. Focuses on Area-Based Development and Smart Governance (100 cities).
- **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0:** ₹77,000 crore allocated for 5 years (2021-26).
- **Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF):** ₹10,000 crore allocated in **Budget 2025-26** to boost Tier 2 & 3 cities' infra.
- **SVANidhi Scheme:** Offers micro-credit to over **36 lakh street vendors**.

5. Best Practices

India

- **Indore:** 7-time cleanest city under Swachh Survekshan using decentralized waste collection and citizen engagement.
- **Surat:** Early warning systems for urban flooding + integration of private sector in infrastructure financing.

Global

- **Bogotá (Colombia):** TransMilenio BRT revolutionized public transport at low cost.



- **Seoul (South Korea):** Cheonggyecheon river restoration project converted urban flyovers into ecological corridors.

6. Committee Recommendations

- **High Powered Expert Committee on Urban Infrastructure (2011):** Advocated ₹39 lakh crore investment and **credit-worthiness index** for ULBs.
- **National Urban Policy Framework (Draft, 2018):** Recommended sustainable compact cities with mixed land use, public spaces, and decentralized governance.
- **MoHUA Standing Committee (2023):** Urged integrated land-use and transport planning in all masterplans.

Conclusion

Urbanization must not become a process of social exclusion and infrastructural crisis. India's urban future demands a shift from reactive responses to proactive planning, from vertical projects to **horizontal community inclusion**, and from elite-centric models to **equity-oriented frameworks**. The urban challenge is not just about buildings—but about **dignity, access, and resilience for every citizen**.

Keywords

Gender Mainstreaming – Strategy for integrating gender perspectives into all policies, programs, and institutions to ensure equality in outcomes. **Feminization of Poverty** – A growing trend where women are disproportionately affected by poverty due to wage gaps, unpaid work, and limited asset ownership. **Population Momentum** – The tendency for population growth to continue even after achieving replacement-level fertility due to a youthful age structure. **Demographic Dividend** – Economic benefit arising from a growing working-age population, provided there is investment in education, skills, and jobs. **Overurbanization** – Urban population growing faster than infrastructure and job availability, leading to slums and civic breakdown. **Informalisation of Employment** – Shift of women and migrants into low-paid, unregulated work without social security, especially in urban areas. **Slum Proliferation** – Rapid spread of informal settlements due to lack of affordable housing, urban poverty, and migration pressure. **Urban Primacy** – A condition where one major city dominates the urban system, drawing excessive resources (e.g., Delhi, Mumbai). **Urban Feminization** – Increasing female participation in urban workspaces, often limited to insecure and informal sectors. **Development-Induced Displacement** – Eviction or loss of livelihood for the poor, especially women and tribals, due to large-scale infrastructure or industrial projects. **Women-Led SHGs (Self-Help Groups)** – Grassroots collectives that promote microfinance, entrepreneurship, and social change among rural and urban women. **Digital Gender Divide** – Unequal access to digital tools and internet among women, affecting empowerment and participation. **Urban Poverty Trap** – A cycle where slum dwellers remain trapped in poverty due to poor access to education, healthcare, and jobs. **Population-Development Nexus** – The mutual relationship between population dynamics and development policies, affecting sustainability. **Participatory Urban Governance** – Involvement of citizens, especially women and marginalized groups, in urban planning, budgeting, and monitoring (e.g., Mohalla Sabhas).

Model Mains Question

Q. *“Issues related to population, poverty and urbanization are deeply interlinked with the status and agency of women in Indian society. Analyze. Also suggest measures for integrated and gender-inclusive development.”*

1. Introduction

Begin with a thematic quote or definition:

“No society can claim development if it sidelines its women or ignores the challenges of its cities and its poor.”

Explain the interlinkage briefly:

- Population pressure worsens urban poverty.
- Women face disproportionate impact due to informal work, unpaid care, poor sanitation, and mobility issues.

2. Body**A. Interlinkages and Challenges**

- High population growth stresses services → affects maternal healthcare, schooling, housing.
- Urban poverty creates unsafe, exploitative conditions for women (e.g., in garment sector).
- Patriarchy and poverty limit access to health, education, and assets.
- SHGs, NGOs help but face funding and scale-up issues.

B. Examples

- 2024–25 Budget for urban women sanitation (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs)
- Kerala’s Kudumbashree as a SHG model.
- Census data on slum population and women’s literacy correlation.

C. Suggestions

- Universalize urban basic services with gender lens (sanitation, street lighting, crèches).
- Promote women-led enterprises under PM SVANidhi and DAY-NULM (Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Urban Livelihood Mission).
- Invest in public transport with gender safety norms.
- Expand population education and youth skilling for demographic dividend.
- Implement UN-Habitat’s “Right to the City” framework in Smart City planning.

3. Conclusion

End with a visionary message:

“Empowering women in urban India is not only a gender issue—it is an urban survival strategy and a development imperative.”

Effects of Globalization on Indian Society



TOPIC-9-Effects Of Globalization on Indian Society.

Section 1: Understanding Globalization in the Indian Context

“Globalization is not just an economic force, it is a social revolution that blurs boundaries of identity, culture, and opportunity.”

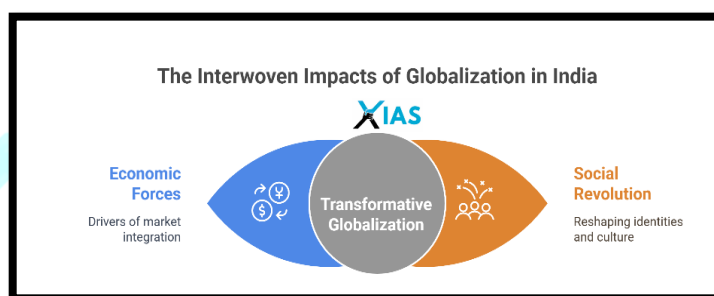
Globalization, in the Indian context, is not limited to free trade or capital flow it has deeply reconfigured the structure, values, aspirations, and institutions of Indian society. Since the 1991 Liberalization-Privatization-Globalization (LPG) reforms, India has emerged as a key factor in the global economy while simultaneously experiencing significant socio-cultural transitions. The trajectory of globalization in India is thus both **transformative and contested**, marked by inclusion and exclusion, opportunity, and anxiety.

1. Concept and Characteristics of Globalization

Globalization refers to the increasing interconnectedness of the world in economic, political, social, technological, and cultural domains. In India, this process became institutionalized post-1991 economic crisis through the **New Economic Policy**.

Key characteristics include:

- **Economic Integration:** Cross-border flow of goods, services, capital, and labor (e.g., rise in FDI from \$132 million in 1991 to over \$84 billion in 2023-24 as per DPIIT).
- **Cultural Exchange:** Popularity of global brands, Western media, fast fashion, English language influence.
- **Technological Diffusion:** Internet, smartphones, fintech, and AI adoption has spread rapidly.
- **Policy Convergence:** Alignment with WTO, IPR regimes, and SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).



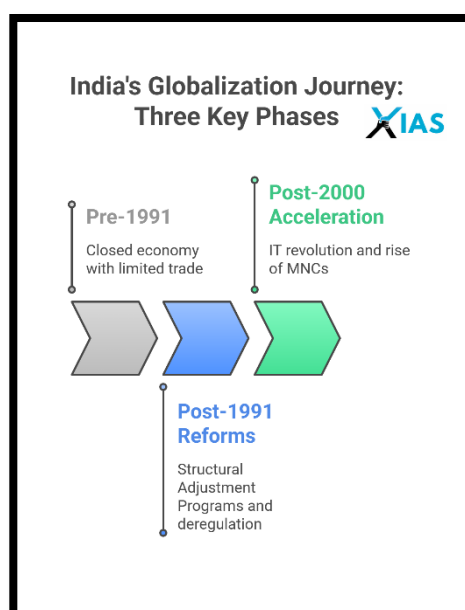
2. Phases of Globalization in India

India's globalization journey can be seen in three phases:

- **Pre-1991 Phase:** Closed economy with limited trade and license-permit raj.
- **Post-1991 Reforms:** Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), reduction in tariffs, disinvestment, and deregulation.
- **Post-2000 Acceleration:** IT revolution, rise of MNCs, service exports, global diaspora networks.

3. Societal Enablers of Globalization

- **Urbanization and Infrastructure:** Smart cities, metros, IT parks enabled easier global linkages.
- **Demographic Dividend:** India's youth population attracted global employers and investors.
- **Digital Penetration:** Over **85 crore internet users** as per TRAI (2024), enabling knowledge and remote work.



flow

- **Government Policies:** Make in India, Start-up India, Gati Shakti, and Atmanirbhar Bharat with global supply chain linkages.

4. Conceptual Understanding: Is Globalization Uniform or Uneven?

Globalization in India is **non-linear** and **regionally uneven**. For instance:

- Metropolitan cities like Bengaluru, Mumbai, Hyderabad became global knowledge hubs.
- In contrast, many rural and tribal regions face **digital exclusion, agrarian stress, and cultural alienation**.
- This duality raises concerns over "multiple Indias" coexisting in a single polity.

5. Globalization vs. Indian Identity: A Balancing Act

India’s global engagement has raised questions about cultural integrity and self-reliance:

- **Debates:** Between tradition vs modernity, regional languages vs English dominance, local economy vs FDI.
- **Efforts to Harmonize:**
 - Vocal for Local initiative under Atmanirbhar Bharat.
 - ODOP (One District One Product) program promoting local crafts globally.
 - International Yoga Day soft power rooted in tradition but accepted globally.

6. India's Position in Global Society

- India is now seen as a **"rule shaper"** not just **"rule taker"**, evident from:
 - Hosting **G20 Presidency (2023)** with the theme “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.”
 - Championing **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** model in Global South.
 - Being the 5th largest economy (IMF, 2024), while anchoring civilizational values globally.
 -

Conclusion: Globalization as a Social Force

India’s journey with globalization is marked by a **dynamic interplay between continuity and change**. The challenge is to integrate with the world without erasing the plural, rooted, and diverse identity of Indian society. The goal should be **"Glocalization"**—thinking globally but acting locally with cultural consciousness.







Section 2: Socio-Economic Restructuring and Employment in Globalized India

“Globalization is not just an economic process—it reshapes the architecture of aspirations, labour, and livelihood.”

India’s socio-economic fabric has undergone profound restructuring under globalization, particularly in employment patterns, wage structures, and livelihood strategies. While sectors like IT and services have witnessed exponential growth, informalization and regional disparities have deepened.

1. Structural Shift in Employment

- The post-1991 reforms led to a shift from an agriculture-dominant economy to a service-led one.
- As per the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2024:

Socio-Economic Restructuring in Globalized India 				
Characteristic	Agriculture	Service Sector	Gig Economy	Informal Sector
 Employment Contribution	42%	31%	N/A	Over 90%
 GDP Contribution	17%	54%	N/A	N/A
 Wage Levels	Lower	Higher	Variable	Low/None
 Social Security	Limited	Formal	Minimal	None
 Regional Impact	Widespread	Concentrated	Urban-centric	Widespread

- Agriculture contributes only about 17% to GDP but still employs over 42% of the workforce, reflecting **disguised unemployment** and **underemployment**.
- The **service sector** employs nearly 31% of the workforce and contributes over 54% to GDP, driven by BPOs, IT, and financial services.
- This unequal transformation has caused a **mismatch between employment and output**, resulting in **jobless growth** in many regions.

2. Rise of the Gig and Platform Economy

- The gig economy has emerged prominently in urban India. According to NITI Aayog (2022), gig workers are expected to reach 23 million by 2029–30.
- Platform-based delivery and transportation jobs (e.g., Zomato, Uber) have created **flexible but insecure work**.
- Only about 12% of gig workers have any form of social protection, and less than 5% contribute to formal savings or pensions.

3. Wage Inequality and the Dual Economy

- Globalization has widened the **urban-rural wage divide**. In 2024, average urban wages were nearly 1.8 times rural wages (MoSPI).
- Top-tier IT professionals and white-collar urban workers have seen real wage gains, while informal rural workers remain stagnant.
- This has led to a **dual economy**, where a small elite benefits from globalization, while the majority remain in vulnerable employment.

4. Youth Unemployment and Skill Mismatch

- According to PLFS April 2025, the **unemployment rate among urban youth (15–29 years)** stands at 17.3%.
- While schemes like **Skill India Mission** have aimed to improve employability, a large skill mismatch remains.
- Only 23% of youth in the labour force are formally skilled (MSDE data 2025), limiting their access to globalized job sectors.

5. Regional Imbalances in Economic Opportunities

- Global capital and industries remain concentrated in regions like **Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad**.
- States like Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha receive less than 5% of total private FDI.
- This deepens **inter-state migration** and **intra-regional inequalities**, with large populations migrating to urban hubs in search of work.

6. Informalization of the Workforce

- Over **90% of India's workforce** continues to be in the informal sector despite globalization.
- Sectors like construction, retail, textiles, and logistics have boomed, but with **no minimum wage, job security, or health insurance**.
- Women have faced **low participation in the formal sector**, with female labour force participation hovering at around 24% in 2025 (PLFS).

7. Migration and Urban Stress

- Economic disparities have driven seasonal and distress migration from rural to urban India.
- During the pandemic, over **10 million migrant workers** returned home due to lack of social security in cities.
- Globalization-driven urban growth has caused pressure on housing, slums, sanitation, and transport exemplified in cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru.

8. Best Practices and Government Responses

- **Code on Social Security, 2020** (yet to be fully implemented) aims to include gig and informal workers under social protection schemes.

- Schemes like **PM Vishwakarma Yojana 2024** are being launched to skill and formalize traditional artisans.
- **Kerala's Kudumbashree model** showcases how micro-enterprises and cooperatives can offer localized employment even under global pressures.
- The **Tamil Nadu Industrial Policy 2021** ensures MSME promotion in backward districts, balancing regional disparities.

9. Committee Recommendations

- **Arjun Sengupta Committee on Unorganized Sector (2007)** emphasized universal social security coverage, health insurance, and old-age pensions.
- **NITI Aayog (2022)** on Gig and Platform Workers recommended a centralised digital database, platform accountability, and subsidized insurance mechanisms.
- **Economic Survey 2024–25** suggests long-term labour reforms, skill infrastructure expansion, and digital skilling to make the workforce globally competitive.

Conclusion: Re-imagining Livelihoods in the Global Era

India's global integration has been uneven across geographies, genders, and sectors. While a small, skilled section benefits immensely, the larger population still grapples with vulnerabilities. To ensure **inclusive globalization**, India must prioritize skilling, social protection, and decentralised employment models. A robust social security net, backed by budgetary commitment, is essential to make globalization work for the last worker.

Section 4: Value Systems, Consumerism, and Identity Transformation

"In the era of globalization, identity is no longer inherited it is constructed, consumed, and often contested."

Globalization has not only influenced India's markets and lifestyles but also deeply transformed individual identities, aspirations, and value systems. From consumption patterns to religious practices and cultural self-perceptions, Indian society today embodies a complex intersection of tradition and modernity. The rising tide of consumerism, aspirational shifts, and global exposure is steadily reshaping what it means to be Indian in the 21st century.

1. Rise of Consumerism and Market Identity

- The spread of global retail chains, digital platforms, and advertising has led to the **commodification of culture and status**.
- **Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE)** rose by **8.1% in 2024–25** (MoSPI), highlighting the expanding appetite for consumption-driven identity.
- Class markers have shifted from caste or community to lifestyle symbols: mobile brands, fashion, cars, vacation destinations.

Example: Social identity in urban India is increasingly shaped by platforms like Instagram and e-commerce preferences (e.g., Apple vs Android).

2. Cultural Hybridity and Aspirational Reordering

- The blending of Indian and Western values has created a **"glocal" identity** rooted in tradition yet responsive to global trends.
- Aspirations are no longer confined to local contexts. Young people in even Tier-2 cities aim for **Ivy League education, startup culture, or remote global work**.
- The dominance of English-language education and Americanized pop culture is replacing regional expressions among urban youth.

Example: A youth from Patna aspiring to work remotely for a Silicon Valley firm or owning global tech gadgets is now a normalized vision.

3. Changing Notions of Status, Success, and Respectability

- Social validation is increasingly linked to economic capital rather than moral, social, or intellectual stature.
- Respectability in traditional Indian society came from elderhood, education, or family lineage. Today, **monetized digital influence** and **global credentials** dominate.

Example: YouTubers or influencers in fashion, fitness, or tech command more social capital than traditional village heads or school teachers in many areas.

4. Identity Conflicts and Cultural Anxiety

- **Youth identity crises** are increasing due to friction between traditional familial expectations and global lifestyle exposure.
- **LGBTQ+ identities, atheism, liberal feminism, and inter-caste relationships** are more visible but often lack societal support.
- **Communalism and regional chauvinism** are sometimes backlash responses to perceived cultural dilution.

Case Study: The rise of “Love Jihad” narratives in northern states is a sociopolitical reaction to interfaith cultural mingling, often exacerbated by digital globalization.

5. Media, Representation and Cultural Homogenization

- Television, OTT platforms, and global cinema dominate domestic content, sidelining indigenous stories.

Example: K-dramas (Korean dramas), American sitcoms, and global music often replace traditional Indian storytelling even in vernacular audiences.

6. Traditional Systems vs. Modern Values

- The **Vanishing Folk Culture** phenomenon has accelerated. Tribal dialects, rural festivals, and local art forms are declining due to mass migration and digitization.
- Yet, **resilience is visible** through revival efforts, like GI-tagged handicrafts, heritage villages, and cultural tourism.

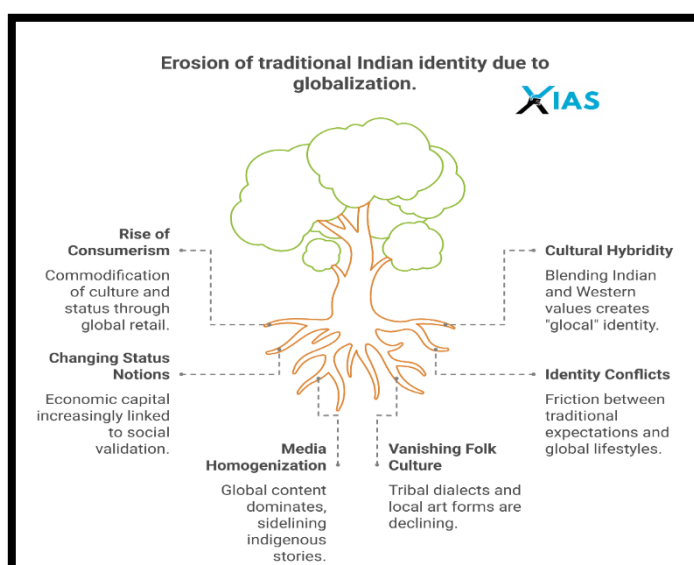
Best Practice: The Government of India’s **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat** program promotes inter-cultural understanding across states to preserve unity in diversity.

7. Challenges Emerging from Identity Shifts

- **Mental health stress** from identity confusion, value clashes, and urban alienation.
- **Rural-urban value rift** widening due to differential access to global content and aspirations.
- **Erosion of collective identity** and weakening of community-based social safety nets.

8. Government and Institutional Responses

- The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, as implemented in 2024–25 across several states, mandates mother tongue instruction till Grade 5, aiming to preserve cultural roots.
- **Cultural Schemes** like the **Scheme for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage**, funded through the Ministry of Culture, have expanded in 2024–25.
- Inclusion of **regional languages in digital content regulation** is now under review by MIB (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting).



Conclusion: Identity in a Time of Flux

India's social identity is in transition from the certainty of inherited values to the ambiguity of chosen ones. Globalization has empowered individuals to redefine who they are, but it has also fragmented the traditional sense of belonging. The way forward is not cultural resistance but **cultural confidence**, where Indian society embraces its diversity without losing its grounding.

Section 5: Political Awareness, Rights Consciousness, and Civic Participation in the Era of Globalization

“Globalization has not just opened markets it has opened minds to rights, voices, and resistance.”

In the post-liberalization era, Indian society has witnessed a remarkable increase in rights consciousness and civic activism. Globalization has empowered citizens with knowledge, networks, and tools to participate more actively in governance, assert their rights, and demand accountability. Yet, it has also exposed them to complex paradoxes of inequality, misinformation, and political polarization.

1. Growing Rights Awareness and Legal Consciousness

- Global exposure through education, international treaties, and digital platforms has fostered legal literacy among marginalized groups.
- Awareness about **Right to Information (RTI Act 2005)**, **rights of women (POSH Act 2013)**, **tribals (PESA Act 1996, FRA 2006)**, and **LGBTQ+ rights** has expanded significantly.

Example: The 2024 SC judgment upheld digital freedom and gender neutrality in inheritance rights widely debated on social media.

2. Rise of Digital Political Engagement

- Global tech has enabled **grassroots activism, e-petitions, social media campaigns, and online protests**.
- During 2024–25, over **2.4 crore citizens** engaged with policy drafts via **MyGov portal** (Source: MoEA 2025).
- **#StopOnlineHate, #SaveMollemForest, #RightToRepair** hashtags became forums for political dialogue and public pressure.

3. Assertion of Subaltern Voices and Regional Identity

- Global forums and media have amplified the representation of Dalit, Adivasi, and gender minority perspectives.
- NGOs and SHGs now network globally (e.g., SEWA's tie-up with UN Women in 2024) to bring visibility to grassroots campaigns.

Case Study: Adivasi women from Jharkhand used Facebook Lives and UN platforms to oppose displacement under mining leases in 2023–24.

4. Civic Protests and Youth-Led Movements

- Global exposure has inspired **leaderless, decentralized protest models** akin to Arab Spring and Hong Kong.
- India's anti-CAA protests (2019–20) and **climate protests in 2024 led by Fridays for Future India** reflect globalization's role in shaping democratic resistance.

5. Challenges of Political Polarization and Misinformation

- **Global social media algorithms** often amplify polarizing content, hate speech, and fake news.
- As per **MIB Annual Report 2024–25**, **fake political content doubled during state elections**, threatening informed public debate.

Example: Deepfakes targeting female candidates and communal misinformation in Bihar and Karnataka during 2024 elections.

6. Political Consumerism and Ethical Citizenship

- Citizens now demand sustainability, gender fairness, and transparency from governments and corporates.
- **Urban consumers boycott brands** over environmental or labour rights violations enabled by global ethical standards.

Example: Boycott of a major fashion brand in India over exploitation of tribal workers in Odisha (2024).

7. Government and Legal Responses

- **Digital India Act (expected 2025)** focuses on algorithmic accountability and citizen rights against surveillance.
- **Election Commission of India** has launched fact-checking initiatives, social media monitoring cells, and digital voter education drives in 2024–25.

Best Practice: The ECI's **cVIGIL app** lets citizens report Model Code violations over **1.7 lakh complaints in 2024 elections**, most from urban youth.

Suggestions and Reform Directions

- Strengthen civic education under NEP (National Education Policy 2020) to build critical digital literacy.
- Promote **local language civic platforms** to reach marginalized citizens.
- Regulate digital misinformation via independent tech-ethics councils and citizen juries.

Conclusion: A Global Citizenry with Indian Roots

Globalization has not weakened Indian democracy it has diversified and energized it. Citizen's today are not just voters; they are watchdogs, whistle-blowers, and co-creators of policy. However, ensuring that this civic energy remains **informed, inclusive, and constructive** is the real challenge for India's evolving democracy.

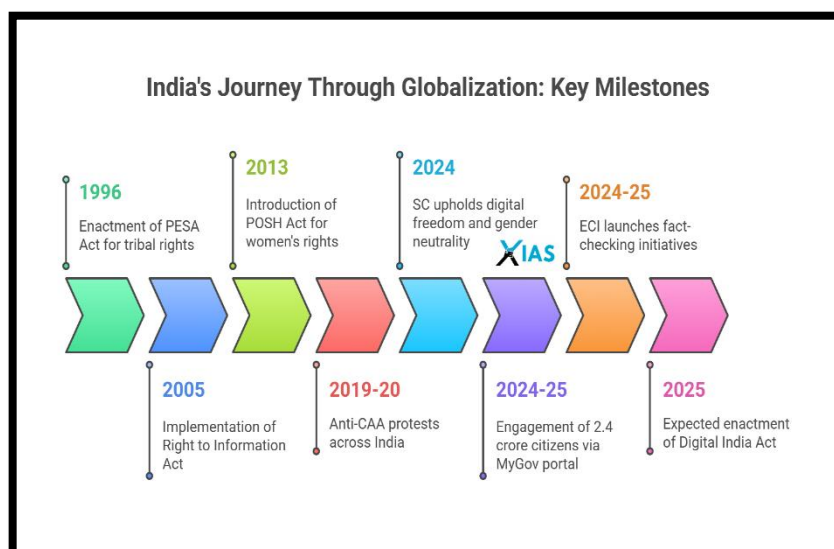
Section 6: Globalization and Challenges to Cultural, Religious, and Linguistic Harmony

"In a global village, identities no longer reside in silos—they interact, intersect, and occasionally collide."

Globalization has profoundly influenced the cultural, religious, and linguistic fabric of Indian society. While it has opened doors to cosmopolitanism, pluralism, and cultural exchange, it has also triggered identity anxieties, cultural homogenization, and contestations over language and religion.

1. Cultural Fluidity vs. Cultural Erosion

- The entry of global entertainment, fashion, and values has expanded freedom of expression but also diluted **indigenous traditions**.
- **UNESCO's 2024 India Cultural Report** flagged extinction risk for **over 196 tribal art forms**, citing urban migration and declining youth interest.



Example: In Gujarat, the Kutchi folk music tradition lost three generational performers in 2024 due to youth shifting to Bollywood-style YouTube content.

2. Religion in a Globalized Public Sphere

- Exposure to global religious discourse has fostered **interfaith awareness**, revivalism, and diaspora-inspired reforms.
- However, **religious polarization**, fringe radicalization, and digital hate crimes have also increased.

Data: NCRB 2024 reported a **28% increase in communal incidents** over digital platforms in urban centres.

Example: Communal tensions in Kerala (2024) were partly inflamed through WhatsApp disinformation channels carrying doctored global narratives.

3. Linguistic Marginalization and Digital Dominance

- The dominance of English and Hindi on digital platforms is gradually marginalizing regional and tribal languages.
- According to **Ministry of Education (2024–25)**, only **13 out of 122 major Indian languages** have a strong digital presence.

Case Study: Students from Manipur, using the **Meitei language**, struggle with access to NEET preparation apps almost none support their language as of 2024.

4. Homogenization vs. Assertion of Identity

- While McDonald's, Netflix, and Nike offer a uniform global experience, many communities are resisting via **ethnic tourism**, **GI-tagging**, and **language revival programs**.
- The paradox of globalization is its tendency to provoke **hyper-local assertion** as a cultural defence mechanism.

Best Practice: The **GI-tagging of Mithila paintings (Bihar)** and revival of **Bhoti language (Ladakh)** were supported by the Ministry of Culture in 2024–25.

5. Diaspora and Reverse Cultural Influence

- The Indian diaspora in the US, UK, and UAE has played a dual role:
 - **Globalizing Indian festivals** (e.g., Diwali at Times Square)
 - Funding and influencing **cultural conservatism or nationalism** back home

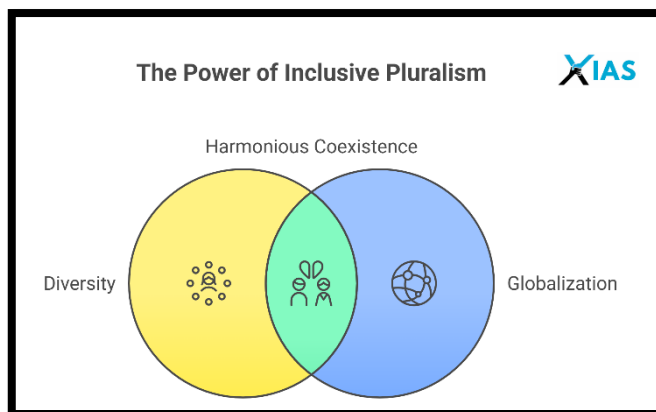
Example: Several temple-building initiatives in rural India in 2024 were supported by NRI donations through global Hindu associations.

6. Institutional Responses and Reforms

- **Ministry of Culture** allocated ₹3,256 crore in Budget 2025–26 for cultural heritage promotion, including tribal museums and digital archives.
- Launch of **BHASHA India 2.0** platform to promote regional language AI tools (MeitY 2024–25).
- Regulation of hate speech under proposed **Digital India Bill 2025**, with community participation.

Challenges in Harmony and Social Fabric

- **Digital religious propaganda** undermining inter-faith trust.
- Urban youth drifting away from mother tongues and festivals.
- Economic exclusion reinforcing **regional and ethnic chauvinism**.



Policy Suggestions and Best Practices

- **Revise curricula** to include local history, folklore, and interfaith studies under NEP.
- Fund **regional language AI tools** for education, governance, and health communication.
- Expand **intercultural exchange under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat** to rural districts.

Conclusion: Balancing Modernity with Harmony

India's diversity is not a challenge to be managed but a strength to be celebrated especially in a globalized age. To prevent globalization from becoming a cultural bulldozer, India must reinforce **inclusive pluralism** where the **Bhojpuri speaker and global entrepreneur**, the **tribal artist and digital creator**, and the **minority faith and majority sentiment** coexist in mutual dignity.

Suggestions, Committees and Policy Responses on Globalization and Society

1. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 & Digital India Initiatives

- **NEP 2020** emphasizes **preservation of cultural heritage**, promotion of **multilingualism**, and inclusion of **Indian knowledge systems** in education to counter Western-centric content dominance.
- **Digital India Campaign** (Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology) promotes **regional language content, digital literacy** and citizen-centric platforms, thereby **democratizing access** to global opportunities without losing local connect.

Best Practice: BHASHA India 2.0 launched in 2024–25 promotes voice-based interfaces in 22 official Indian languages.

2. NITI Aayog Policy Papers

- **Vision 2047 Document** (NITI Aayog, Draft 2024) outlines the need for:
 - **Equitable globalization** that includes vulnerable groups (rural women, tribal communities)
 - Support for **socially inclusive entrepreneurship**
 - Use of **AI in regional language learning** and **e-Skill India** for decentralized capacity building

3. Ministry of Women & Child Development

- **Mission Shakti 2024–25 Budget** (₹3,361 crore) highlights support to **self-help groups (SHGs)** and **digital skilling** for rural women to benefit from globalization.
- Promotes **safe working conditions in gig platforms**, digital financial literacy and market access.

4. Ministry of Tribal Affairs

- **TRIFED & GI-tag support** to tribal artisans promotes '**vocal for local**' in global markets.
- Launched "**Adarsh Gram Tribal Hub**" pilot in 2024 to integrate tribal communities into **global handicraft and eco-tourism chains** while preserving cultural identity.

5. Ministry of Culture

- ₹3,256 crore allocated in **Union Budget 2025–26** for:
 - Digital archives of dying languages
 - Establishment of **10 Tribal Freedom Fighter Museums**
 - Grants for local cultural festivals and folk schools under the **Kala Sanskriti Vikas Yojana**

6. Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports (2024)

Recommended:

- **Indian language inclusion** in higher education tech platforms
- Incentives for global Indian diaspora to **fund local cultural institutions**
- Promoting **intercultural education** under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB)

7. Ministry of Labour and Employment

- Introduced codes and reforms to address **vulnerabilities of gig workers and platform-based employees**, especially those affected by globalization of work.

- 2024 Scheme: **e-SHRAM database** to identify and upskill informal sector workers transitioning due to globalization

8. Ministry of External Affairs – Soft Power Diplomacy

- **Global Diaspora Engagement Policy (2024)** promotes India's cultural exports and encourages diaspora funding for local language schools, temples, and cultural events.

9. National Commission for Women (NCW) 2025 Consultation

- Proposed gender audit mechanisms for **global media content** and international ed-tech platforms that shape youth perceptions of gender, culture, and identity.
- Supported **regulation of digital abuse and disinformation** affecting women and minority groups in a globalized space.

10. UNDP India (2024 Human Development Report)

- Called for **"Just Transitions in Globalization"**, emphasizing:
 - Rural access to digital markets
 - Legal protection for cultural knowledge
 - Promoting decentralized supply chains to benefit small artisans



Final Conclusion: Globalization and the Indian Society - A Dialogue of Change and Continuity

"Globalization is not a monologue of the West; it is a dialogue of civilizations where India speaks not just to the world, but to herself."

Over the past three decades, globalization has transformed Indian society into a dynamic interplay of tradition and transformation. It has:

- Expanded the **aspirational horizons** of millions through digital connectivity, market access, and cultural exposure.
- Reconfigured **social structures** empowering women, youth, and civil society with greater voice and visibility.
- Introduced **new tensions** between global values and indigenous customs, between digital liberty and misinformation, between cultural diversity and homogenization.

Yet, the Indian experience of globalization is **not a passive absorption** of external influences. Rather, it reflects a **resilient negotiation** blending yoga with startups, caste with capitalism, dharma with democracy, and local dialects with global dialogues.

India's challenge is not whether to embrace globalization, but **how to shape it** in a way that strengthens our constitutional ethos, protects the vulnerable, and preserves our social fabric.

In this journey, India must pursue a **"glocal" model** thinking globally but acting locally; retaining the **soul of its civilizational pluralism**, while embracing the opportunities of the interconnected world.

As Rabindranath Tagore envisioned: "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high... into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake"—freedom not only from poverty, but also from narrowness in the age of globalization.

Keywords

Glocalization – Adaptation of global ideas to fit local cultures, e.g., McAloo Tikki in India. India's response to globalization balances global exposure with local ethos. **Cultural Homogenization** – Loss of regional distinctiveness due to global cultural dominance, such as Western fashion or fast food replacing traditional Indian practices. **Cultural Hybridization** – Mixing of global and Indian cultural elements, such as Indo-western fashion or Indian hip-hop music. **Digital Divide** – Unequal access to technology and digital literacy among different sections of society, a major concern in globalized digital India. **Informalization of Labour** – Rise of precarious, gig-based jobs without social security due to globalization-driven restructuring of industries. **Consumerism** – Increasing consumption patterns influenced by global media and advertising, shaping lifestyles and values of Indian middle class. **Diaspora Engagement** – Role of global Indians in influencing culture, economy, and policy. India leverages its diaspora for soft power. **Identity Assertion** – Reaction to globalization where communities reassert traditional identities (religion, caste, language) to resist cultural erosion. **Gender Empowerment through Globalization** – Women accessing global markets via platforms like Etsy, YouTube, or digital freelancing. **Youth Cosmopolitanism** – Exposure of Indian youth to global values through education, entertainment, and social media. **Contract Farming** – Entry of MNCs into agriculture supply chains, transforming rural livelihood patterns. **Reverse Migration** – Return of NRIs and professionals due to better opportunities or crises abroad (e.g., during COVID-19). **Soft Power** – Use of India's culture, yoga, cuisine, and cinema to influence the world. Also reflected in growing global acceptance of Indian festivals. **Linguistic Endangerment** – Marginalization of tribal and regional languages due to dominance of English and Hindi in digital-global spaces. **Social Media Tribalism** – Creation of echo chambers and identity-based polarization accelerated by global digital platforms.

Model Mains Question

Q. "Globalization has redefined Indian society not only economically but also culturally and institutionally." Critically examine the multi-dimensional impacts of globalization on Indian society with relevant examples. (250 words)

1. Introduction (30–40 words):

Begin with a sharp definition of globalization and a statement on its transforming influence on Indian society. Add a quote if space permits.

E.g., "Globalization, the intensified interconnectedness of economies and cultures, has transformed India into a mosaic of modernity and tradition."

2. Body: Multi-dimensional Impact**A. Economic Impact**

- Changes in employment: gig economy, platform work
- Rural-urban divide and rise in inequality
- Role of FDI, global value chains

B. Social and Cultural Impact

- Shift in family structure: nuclearization
- Youth aspirations and Western lifestyle
- Challenges to traditional norms (e.g., interfaith marriages)

C. Gender and Education

- Women's increased economic participation
- Global education platforms, exposure

D. Rural and Agricultural Impact

- Contract farming, GM crops
- New market linkages vs farmer vulnerability

E. Identity, Language, and Conflict

- Cultural homogenization vs pluralism
- Rise of linguistic nationalism, social media echo chambers

3. Challenges and Suggestions (integrated within each dimension)

- Digital divide, consumerism, dislocation of traditional jobs
- Policy reforms: NEP 2020, Digital India, E-Shram, support for tribal arts

4. Conclusion (30–40 words)

Reaffirm the dual nature of globalization as an opportunity and a challenge. Emphasize the need for India to craft its own "glocal" model rooted in equity, diversity, and resilience.



Social Empowerment, Communalism, Regionalism & Secularism



Topic-10-Social Empowerment, Communalism, Regionalism & Secularism.

Section 1: Concept and Dimensions of Social Empowerment

"Social empowerment is not merely about access—it is about agency, dignity, and the removal of invisible chains."

1. Conceptual Understanding

Social empowerment refers to the **broad-based process of transforming social hierarchies**, enabling historically marginalized groups such as Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), minorities, women, transgender persons, and persons with disabilities to **access rights, resources, representation, and respect** on equal footing with others.

It includes three foundational aspects:

- **Capability building** (access to education, health, and livelihood)
- **Removal of discrimination** (legal safeguards, social reform)
- **Participation in decision-making** (representation in governance and public life)

It is both a **constitutional aspiration** (Articles 15, 16, 17, 46, 243D) and a **governance imperative** for inclusive development.

2. Dimensions of Social Empowerment in India

A. Educational Inclusion

- RTE Act (2009) and NEP 2020 guarantee equitable learning outcomes.
- 2025–26 Budget outlay: ₹1.25 lakh crore for education; ₹9,000 crore earmarked for SC/ST scholarships.
- Example: *Eklavya Model Residential Schools* for tribal students expanded to 740+ locations by 2025.

B. Economic Empowerment

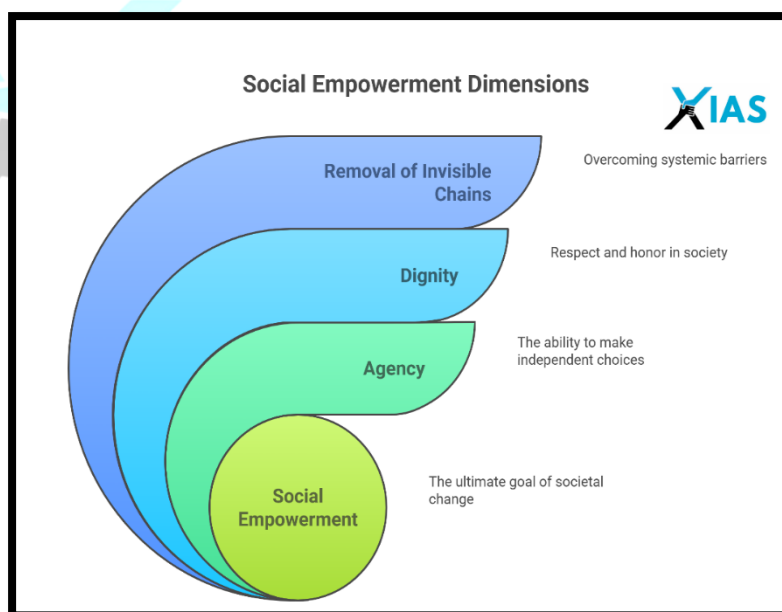
- MUDRA (Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency) loans: over 70% disbursed to women in 2024–25.
- Digital Saksharta (literacy) Mission scaled to 3 crore rural women in 2024.
- Self-help group (SHG) revolution: over 9 crore women mobilized under DAY-NRLM.

C. Health Empowerment

- Ayushman Bharat – PMJAY has covered over 5.8 crore hospitalizations (as of April 2025).
- Special tribal health action plan initiated in 100 aspirational districts.

D. Political Representation

- 33% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- Constitutional amendment proposed in 2024 to reserve seats for SC/ST in cooperative societies.



E. Legal and Institutional Safeguards

- SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act strengthened with exclusive fast-track courts in 14 states (2025).
- Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) mandates 4% reservation in government jobs.

3. Major Challenges in Social Empowerment

A. Persistent Social Stigma and Discrimination

- Despite constitutional and legal provisions, **caste and gender-based exclusion remains entrenched**.
- Example: In 2024, NCRB reported a **6.7% increase in caste-based crimes**, particularly in UP, Bihar, and MP.
- **Transgender persons and religious minorities** continue to face residential and workplace discrimination, limiting their agency.

B. Intergenerational Deprivation

- Poverty, malnutrition, lack of digital access, and educational backwardness create a **cycle of disempowerment**, particularly in tribal and rural belts.
- Example: According to NITI Aayog (2024), 45% of STs in aspirational districts still lack access to quality secondary education.

C. Institutional and Policy Gaps

- Fragmented schemes lead to **poor convergence and low impact**.
- **Lack of intersectionality** no unified policy for a disabled tribal woman or a Muslim widow with low income.
- 2024 CAG audit found underutilization of SC sub-plan funds in 9 states.

D. Digital and Urban-Rural Divide

- As per TRAI 2025, only **37% of rural women** own internet-enabled devices.
- Digital literacy and empowerment programs are skewed toward Tier-1 cities.

E. Underrepresentation in Decision-Making

- Women constitute only **14.4% of Parliament** (as of 2024).
- Minorities make up less than 7% of senior civil service positions despite being 20%+ of the population.

F. Cultural Hegemony and Language Barriers

- Tribal identities, regional dialects, and non-mainstream practices face marginalization in education, administration, and media.
- Example: Only 12 tribal languages are officially used in state syllabi (NCERT 2024).

4. Suggestions and Institutional Measures

Government Strategies

- **Social Inclusion Dashboard** announced in 2025 to track disaggregated empowerment outcomes across caste, gender, and region.

Challenge	Description	Example
 Social Stigma and Discrimination	Entrenched exclusion based on caste and gender.	Increased caste-based crimes
 Intergenerational Deprivation	Cycle of disempowerment due to poverty and lack of access.	Lack of quality education
 Institutional and Policy Gaps	Fragmented schemes and lack of unified policies.	Underutilization of funds
 Digital and Urban-Rural Divide	Unequal access to digital resources.	Low internet access for rural women
 Underrepresentation in Decision-Making	Insufficient representation in parliament and civil service.	Low percentage of women in Parliament
 Cultural Hegemony and Language Barriers	Marginalization of tribal identities and languages.	Limited tribal languages in syllabi

- **PM-Vishwakarma Yojana** includes social recognition, training, and loans for artisans from backward classes.

Committee Recommendations

- **S.R. Sankaran Committee (2024):**
 - Suggested a **unified National Empowerment Authority** to avoid duplication.
 - Recommended an **Empowerment Impact Assessment** for all Union schemes.
- **Verma Committee on Women Empowerment** called for structural gender audits across ministries.

Best Practices

- **Bihar's Har Ghar Jal plus Women SHG convergence model** doubled rural women's income in 30 districts (2025).
- **Chhattisgarh's Forest Rights-linked Livelihood Project** helped tribal women earn ₹35 crore via mahua-based micro-enterprises in FY 2024–25.

5. Final Reflection

Empowerment must not be reduced to symbolic gestures. It requires structural transformation of institutions, narratives, and norms. India must move from "inclusion as welfare" to "empowerment as entitlement." Only then can the country truly realize the vision of **Samajik Nyay (Social Justice)** and **Antyodaya (upliftment of the last person)** as envisioned by the Constitution.

Section 2: Instruments and Institutions for Social Empowerment in India

"Empowerment without institutional support is a castle built on sand."

1. Introduction: Enabling Structures of Empowerment

Social empowerment is not a spontaneous phenomenon it is the **product of robust institutional mechanisms** backed by law, policy, finance, and participation. In India, these mechanisms include **constitutional provisions, statutory bodies, welfare ministries, financial instruments, and grassroots organizations**, all working to dismantle inherited structures of inequality and marginalization.

2. Constitutional and Legal Foundations

- **Fundamental Rights:** Article 15 (Prohibition of discrimination), Article 16 (Equal opportunity in public employment), Article 17 (Abolition of untouchability).
- **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP):** Article 38 (social order for welfare), Article 46 (promotion of educational and economic interests of SC/ST).
- **Special Acts:** SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016; Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

3. Key Institutional Mechanisms

A. Ministries and Departments

- **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE):** Nodal body for SCs, OBCs, elderly, and transgenders.
 - In 2025–26, it received ₹13,691 crore (Union Budget 2025–26).
- **Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA):** Operates EMRS (Eklavya Model Residential Schools), Van Dhan Yojana.
- **Ministry of Minority Affairs:** Implements PM VIKAS, Maulana Azad Fellowship (revamped in 2024–25).
- **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD):** Operates Mission Shakti, Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0.

B. Statutory and Constitutional Bodies

- **National Commissions:**
 - National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)
 - National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)
 - National Commission for Minorities (NCM)
 - National Commission for Women (NCW)
 - National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)
- All these bodies conduct monitoring, grievance redressal, and policy recommendation functions.

C. Social Security and Financial Instruments

- **Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP):** Ensure dedicated budgetary allocations.
- **Venture Capital Fund for SCs and OBCs:** ₹400 crore corpus for entrepreneurship (as of 2025).
- **Stand-Up India and PM SVANidhi:** Financial inclusion for SC/ST/OBC and minority entrepreneurs.

D. Digital and Monitoring Tools

- **UDISE+ (Unified District Information System for Education Plus):** Disaggregated educational data for SC/ST/girls.
- **Empowerment Portals:** Such as Swavlamban (disability), PM-JANMAN dashboard (tribal missions).

4. Challenges in Institutional Empowerment

A. Budgetary Underutilization and Leakages

- CAG Report (2024): ₹2,365 crore of SCSP funds unspent in 7 states.
- Overlapping schemes lead to confusion and delays.

B. Weak Monitoring and Accountability

- National commissions lack binding powers and remain underfunded.
- NCW receives less than ₹25 crore annually (Budget 2025–26), limiting its outreach.

C. Fragmentation of Policy Framework

- Disempowered groups often fall under multiple departments without convergence.
- No unified index to assess multi-sectoral empowerment.

D. Urban-Rural and Regional Disparities

- EMRS (tribal schools) concentrated in central India; NE states under-covered.
- Digital empowerment tools fail to reach non-literate groups.

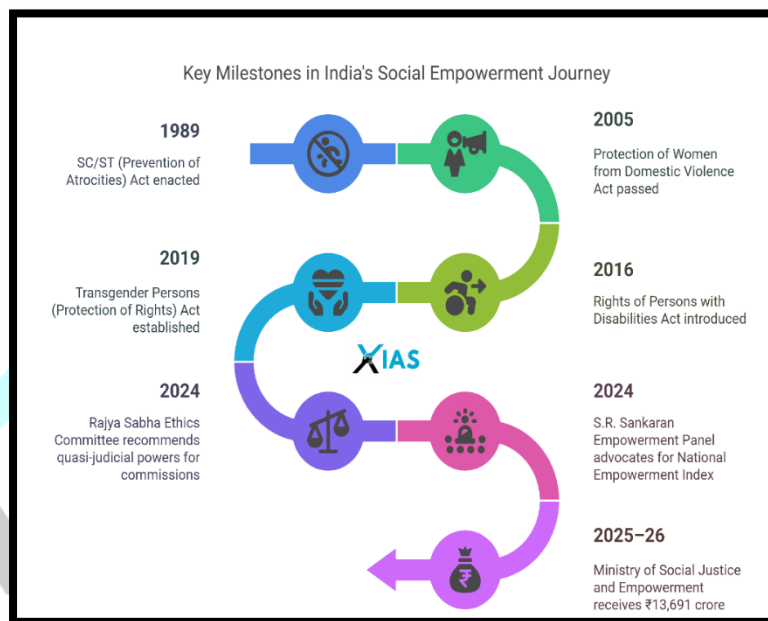
5. Suggestions and Way Forward

Government Initiatives (2024–25)

- **National Social Empowerment Grid (under development)** to bring all schemes under one portal.
- **Mission Antyodaya 2.0** to converge empowerment schemes at the Gram Panchayat level.

Committee Recommendations

- **Rajya Sabha Ethics Committee (2024):** Empower commissions with quasi-judicial powers.
- **S.R. Sankaran Empowerment Panel:** Advocated for a **National Empowerment Index** and **Annual Social Audit**.



Best Practices

- **Odisha's Mission Shakti** integrated SHG and social security schemes reduced dropout of girls by 37%.
- **Tamil Nadu's Social Justice Monitor** dashboard tracks policy outcomes across 10 social indicators.

6. Conclusion: Institutions as Equalizers

Empowerment becomes sustainable only when supported by strong, accountable institutions. India has built an expansive institutional ecosystem but the future lies in **integrating their functions, ensuring budget accountability, and democratizing access** at the last mile. A socially empowered India must not only be inclusive on paper but in performance and participation.

Section 3: Understanding Communalism – Meaning, Evolution, and Trends

“Communalism begins where democracy weakens, and identity becomes a weapon instead of a bridge.”

1. Introduction: What is Communalism?

Communalism is an ideology based on the belief that one's religion is the primary basis of social, political, and economic identity, often to the exclusion or detriment of others. In the Indian context, it refers to **political mobilization on religious lines**, leading to **tensions, violence, and polarization**.

It is not merely about religion but about using religious identity to **construct political narratives**, often in ways that disrupt social harmony.

2. Types and Phases of Communalism

Communalism evolves in degrees:

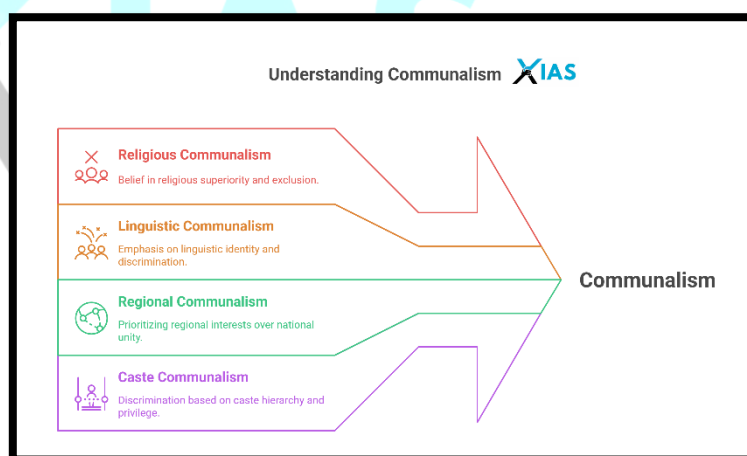
- **Mild Communalism:** Cultural assertion, symbolic pride, or religious festivals politicized (e.g., campaign on religious sites).
- **Moderate Communalism:** Competitive mobilization and voting blocs (e.g., political parties appealing to specific communities).
- **Extreme Communalism:** Active hostility and violence (e.g., communal riots).

Historically, Indian communalism evolved in three broad phases:

- **Colonial Legacy (Late 19th–1947):** Divide-and-rule policies, separate electorates, and communal organizations like Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League.
- **Post-Independence Phase (1947–1980s):** Rise of linguistic reorganization, but also integration efforts. Incidents like Jabalpur riots (1961).
- **Contemporary Phase (1980s–Present):** Politicization of religious identity, Ayodhya dispute, Delhi riots (2020), and digital communal narratives.

3. Characteristics of Indian Communalism

- **Majoritarianism vs Minoritarianism:** Both forms feed each other in a vicious cycle.
- **Political Instrumentalism:** Electoral gains through religious polarization.
- **Event-centric Intensification:** Riots, court verdicts, elections often become flashpoints.
- **Online Radicalization:** Hate speech and fake news often precede offline violence.



4. Conceptual Clarification

Communalism ≠ **Religious Practice**: Practicing religion is a right under Article 25. Communalism, however, seeks to politicize this identity.

Communalism ≠ **Secularism**: Secularism demands state neutrality. Communalism seeks religious preference in governance.

5. Challenges in Combating Communalism

- **Politicization of Religion**: Political parties often indulge in soft or hard communalism for vote-bank politics.
- **Delayed Justice**: According to the Ministry of Home Affairs (2024), conviction rate in communal riot cases remains under 30%.
- **Digital Propaganda**: Misinformation on platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook remains unregulated despite IT Rules (2021).
- **Lack of Grassroots Reconciliation Mechanisms**: No institutional mechanism for post-conflict healing or reconciliation.
- **Media Polarization**: Sensationalized communal reporting distorts public discourse.

6. Institutional Measures and Best Practices

Constitutional Safeguards:

- **Article 25–28**: Freedom of religion.
- **Article 29–30**: Minority cultural and educational rights.
- **RPA Act, 1951 – Section 123(3)**: Bans appeal to religion in elections.

Government Efforts:

- **National Integration Council (NIC)**: Reconstituted in 2024 with district-level outreach panels.
- **Public Order Modernization Scheme**: ₹600 crore allocated in Budget 2025–26 to equip state police to manage communal violence.

Committee Recommendations:

- **Sachar Committee**: Called for de-politicization of religious identity in governance.
- **Justice Rajinder Sachar Action Review (2024)**: Proposed annual communal harmony audit by state DGPs.

Best Practice:

- **Kerala's Peace Committees** at the Panchayat level: Integrated religious leaders to mediate tensions reduced violence by 45% between 2021–2024.

7. Conclusion: Beyond Tolerance, Towards Acceptance

India's pluralism is its strength, but communalism threatens to hollow it from within. It is not enough to tolerate diversity; India must **actively protect and promote inclusive coexistence**. This requires:

- Strengthening law and order
- Reforming media ethics
- Empowering civil society
- Reaffirming constitutional morality

As Gandhiji said, "The soul of India lives in its villages" and only when the smallest unit of society resists hatred, can the nation be truly united.

Section 4: Communalism in Contemporary India – Causes and Challenges

"When religion is politicized, faith becomes a fault line rather than a foundation."

1. Introduction: A Fragile Mosaic under Pressure

India's pluralistic heritage is built on religious coexistence and syncretism. Yet, in recent decades, communalism has evolved from sporadic tension to **structural fault lines**, threatening the democratic fabric. Unlike earlier periods driven by direct religious mobilization, **contemporary communalism is algorithmic, political, and often state-enabled**—operating both online and offline.

2. Root Causes of Rising Communalism in Contemporary India

A. Political Exploitation of Religious Identities

- Parties and actors use **sectarian mobilization** to consolidate votes.
- Example:** In the 2024 Lok Sabha campaign season, the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** issued multiple notices for speeches invoking religious sentiments in breach of **Section 123(3) of the Representation of People Act (1951)**.
- The absence of strong punitive action further emboldens offenders.

B. Digital Radicalization and Hate

Amplification

- Communalism today spreads faster via **social media algorithms** designed to promote sensational content.
- Case Study:** The **Mandsaur riot (2024)** in Madhya Pradesh was traced back to a fake image circulated via WhatsApp, which spread across 400 groups in 3 hours (as per a forensic report by I4C, MHA).
- Challenge:** No real-time AI-based communal rumor detection mechanism at the national level.

C. Failure of Early Warning and Intelligence Systems

- Intelligence inputs are often ignored or underutilized due to administrative inertia.
- In the **2023 Howrah clashes**, state intelligence had flagged potential tension ahead of a procession, yet preventive deployment was delayed.

D. Institutional Bias and Policing Gaps

- Selective action during riots (e.g., targeting one community, arbitrary arrests) erodes trust.
- Finding:** According to the **PUCL Annual Communal Justice Review (2024)**, 73% of communal FIRs in 5 major states were filed only against minority youth.

E. Delayed Justice Delivery and Lack of Accountability

- Most communal violence cases stretch over **10+ years** without resolution.
- Official Data:** As per **NCRB (2024)**, conviction rate in communal violence cases was only **18.9%**, among the lowest for public order crimes.
- This promotes a culture of impunity.

F. Media Polarization and Paid Narratives

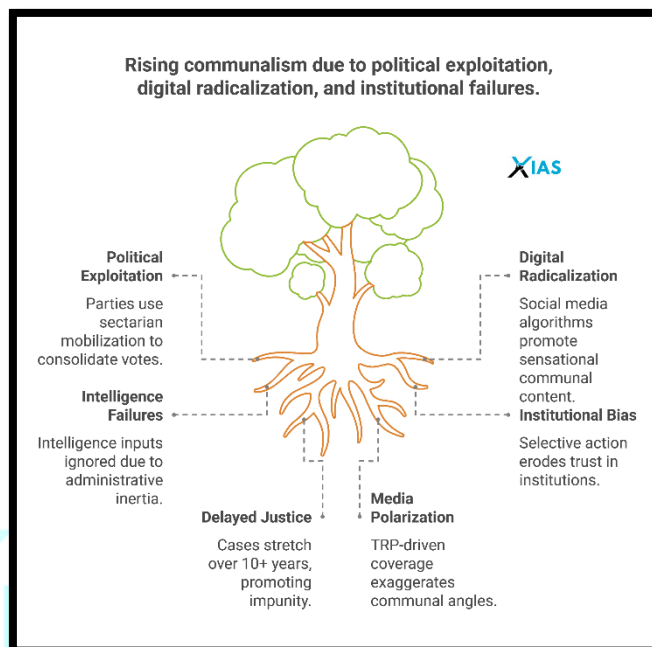
- TRP-driven coverage often plays up communal angles, with doctored footage or selective reporting.
- The **Press Council of India (PCI)** issued 11 censure notices in 2024 for media houses exaggerating or misreporting communal issues.

G. Lack of Post-Conflict Rehabilitation and Reconciliation

- No national policy exists for **rehabilitation of riot survivors** or **rebuilding of mixed community settlements**.
- Trauma counselling, compensation, and social healing are largely absent.

3. Multi-Dimensional Impacts of Communalism

- Social:** Breakdown of trust, rise in religious segregation in housing, schooling, and workspaces.
- Political:** Weakening of democratic discourse; issue-based politics replaced by identity politics.



- **Economic:** Communal riots cause loss to MSMEs and daily-wage workers. After the **2020 North-East Delhi riots**, over ₹27 crore worth of livelihood infrastructure was destroyed.
- **Administrative:** Overburdened police and judiciary, declining public faith in impartiality of governance.
- **Educational:** Young minds are exposed to divisive narratives, especially on unregulated online platforms.

4. Suggestions: Policy, Legal and Institutional Reforms

A. Legal and Constitutional Measures

- **Enforce Section 123(3) of RPA, 1951:** Ensure time-bound prosecution for use of religion in elections.
- **Strengthen IT Rules, 2021:** Introduce communal hate-tracking algorithms; mandate removal within 6 hours.
- **Fast-Track Communal Courts:** Special benches for riot cases as recommended by **Srikrishna Commission**.

B. Administrative and Technological Reforms

- **Pan-India Early Warning System:** Community-based reporting + AI-driven digital surveillance under **I4C (Indian Cyber Coordination Centre)**.
- **Model Communal Harmony Act:** NITI Aayog (2024) proposed a national model act to define hate crimes, mandate rehabilitation, and institutional accountability.

C. Social and Civic Engagement

- **District Peace Committees:** Mandatory in all districts under Collector's chairmanship, with religious leaders, youth icons, and civil society.
- **Curriculum Reform:** Introduce communal harmony and constitutional morality in NCERT Class VI–XII under NEP 2020.

5. Best Practices and Successful Models

- **Kerala's Panchayat Peace Circles (2023–24):** Structured dialogue platforms at village level with monthly religious diversity meets.
- **Telangana's Whatsapp Surveillance Cells:** Flagged 1,700 fake news messages during 2023 Eid–Holi period, stopping 14 potential incidents.
- **Mizoram's Interfaith Student Councils:** Promote pluralism through community projects recognized in **MoHRD's 2024 Youth Peace Awards**.

Conclusion: Healing Through Accountability

Communalism thrives when institutions delay justice, when politics rewards polarization, and when society forgets empathy. **India must shift from passive secularism to active pluralism**, where constitutional values are not just celebrated but institutionalized.

The road ahead lies in:

- Preventive policing,
- Swift justice delivery,
- Ethical media,
- And civic education.

Only when citizens resist hate in daily life at schools, homes, and workspaces can India truly live its motto:

“UNITY IN DIVERSITY”

Section 5: Regionalism in India – Causes, Forms, and Federal Challenges

“A nation is not a map of territory, but a mosaic of regional identities united in shared constitutional faith.”

1. Introduction: The Two Faces of Regionalism

Regionalism in India reflects a paradox: it has served both as a **vehicle of empowerment** and a **threat to national integration**. While regional aspirations have led to legitimate demands for autonomy, cultural recognition, and economic equity, their politicization often escalates into secessionism, inter-state disputes, and parochialism.

2. Core Causes of Regionalism in India

A. Economic Inequality and Resource Disparity

- Uneven industrialization and underinvestment cause **regional economic backwardness**.
- **Example:** Bihar and Odisha receive less than 5% of total FDI inflows (DPIIT, 2024), compared to 28% in Maharashtra alone.
- Backwardness Index 2023 (NITI Aayog) ranked Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh in the bottom five on HDI (Human Development Index).

B. Cultural and Linguistic Identity Assertion

- When national symbols appear to dominate, **regional languages, scripts, and heritage** demand protection.
- **Case:** Anti-Hindi agitations in Tamil Nadu in 2024 revived concerns over **Article 351** (promotion of Hindi) overshadowing federal linguistic diversity.

C. Administrative Neglect and Political Alienation

- Northeastern states often feel **excluded from central policy discourse**, citing low representation in central services and delay in project approvals.
- **Example:** Arunachal Pradesh’s demand for constitutional amendment to extend **Sixth Schedule provisions** stems from perceived administrative centralization.

D. Ethnic and Tribal Mobilization

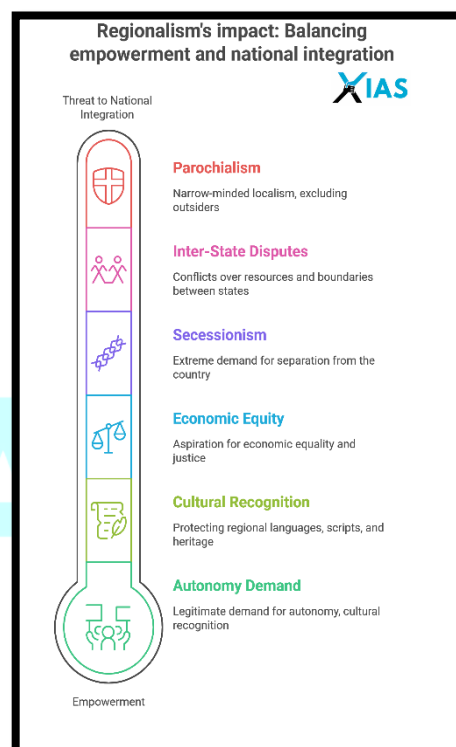
- Tribal communities resisting outside land acquisition, fearing cultural erosion and displacement.
- **Case:** The Pathalgadi Movement (revived in 2023–24) in Jharkhand, where tribal villages declared autonomy under **PESA Act, 1996** but faced legal action.

E. Historical Memory and Grievance

- Regions with legacy of colonial neglect or princely exclusion (e.g., Telangana, Vidarbha) show stronger regional consciousness.
- **Data:** Vidarbha still lags rest of Maharashtra in per capita income by ₹34,000 (Economic Survey of Maharashtra, 2024–25).

3. Forms of Regionalism in India

- **Demand for Statehood** – e.g., Vidarbha, Gorkhaland.
- **Demand for Autonomy** – e.g., Jammu and Kashmir’s pre-370 revocation status.
- **Inter-State Disputes** – e.g., Cauvery (Tamil Nadu-Karnataka), Mahadayi (Goa-Karnataka).
- **Son-of-the-Soil Movements** – e.g., Maharashtra’s MNS campaigns against migrant workers.
- **Regional Political Parties as Assertion Tools** – e.g., DMK, TMC, AAP.



4. Challenges Posed by Regionalism

A. Threat to National Integration

- Rise of **ethno-linguistic chauvinism** erodes common national identity.
- Example: In 2024, political clashes over language signage in Bengaluru escalated into attacks on non-Kannada businesses.

B. Policy Paralysis due to Regional Gridlock

- **GST Council and Inter-State Council** decisions are often delayed due to regional divergence.
- In 2024, consensus on petroleum inclusion in GST was blocked by oil-producing states citing fiscal federalism.

C. Rise in Sub-Nationalism

- While regional pride is constitutional, its conversion to **ethnic exceptionalism** triggers social exclusion.
- **Example:** NRC (National Register of Citizens) in Assam led to identity anxiety among ethnic minorities.

D. Distorted Development and Regional Imbalance

- Central schemes fail in areas where state governments resist them as encroachment.
- **Example:** Implementation of **PM Gati Shakti** plan in Kerala and West Bengal faced regional resistance due to alignment and land issues.

E. Political Fragmentation and Governance Disruption

- Rise of coalition politics due to strong regional parties leads to **frequent alliance breakdowns** and policy U-turns.
- **Data:** In 2024, 62% of Lok Sabha seats were won by regional parties in non-Hindi belt states.

5. Suggestions and Way Forward

A. Strengthening Cooperative Federalism

- Revive **Inter-State Council (Article 263)** as a conflict resolution forum.
- Promote NITI Aayog's "**India @100**" vision which emphasizes **region-specific development blueprints**.

B. Equitable Fiscal Federalism

- Revise the **Finance Commission devolution formula** to factor in **intra-state disparities**.
- Empower backward regions through special category status and **Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF)**.

C. Cultural Federalism and Linguistic Pluralism

- Promote all 22 languages in the **Eighth Schedule** with equal media, administrative, and educational representation.
- **Model:** Kerala's trilingual education policy (Malayalam, Hindi, English) ensures balance of identity and mobility.

D. Empowered Regional Planning Councils

- Constitute zonal councils with real fiscal and planning autonomy (as per **Sarkaria Commission and Punchhi Commission** suggestions).

E. Civil Society Engagement and Inter-State Youth Integration

- Expand **National Integration Camps** (Ministry of Youth Affairs) beyond urban areas to border and tribal districts.

6. Best Practices and National Models

- **Northeast Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS):** Targeted funds for backward northeast districts.
- **Aspirational Districts Programme:** NITI Aayog's adaptive regional planning in 112 districts.
- **Inter-State Border Task Forces** (launched in 2023 in Northeast): Resolved 9 out of 15 land disputes through dialogue models.

7. Conclusion: Celebrating Regions, Strengthening the Nation

India's strength lies not in **homogenizing her regions**, but in **harmonizing them through justice and dialogue**. Regionalism must evolve as a **positive force**, channelled through constitutionally empowered frameworks, inclusive planning, and national consensus.

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated in the 2024 Independence Day Speech:

"Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat is not about sameness, but solidarity in diversity."

By nurturing regional identities **within a framework of national integrity**, India can transform regionalism from a challenge into a catalyst for cooperative development.

Section 6: Regionalism vs. Federalism – Constitutional and Political Implications

"Federalism is the thread, regionalism is the colour; together they weave the Indian democratic fabric."

1. Introduction: Balancing Unity and Diversity

India's Constitution envisions a **quasi-federal structure** where power-sharing allows regional identities to thrive within a national framework. However, when regionalism shifts from being a cultural assertion to a **political confrontation**, it tests the resilience of Indian federalism. This section explores the **interplay, frictions, and synergy** between these two phenomena.

2. Federalism in India: Constitutional Foundation

- **Part XI (Articles 245–263)** demarcates Union, State, and Concurrent lists (Seventh Schedule).
- The Constitution establishes "**cooperative federalism**" (as emphasized by NITI Aayog) over competitive decentralization.
- **Article 1:** India is a "Union of States" not a federation formed by agreement, but one with **strong centripetal features**.

3. Regionalism: Assertion within the Federal Setup

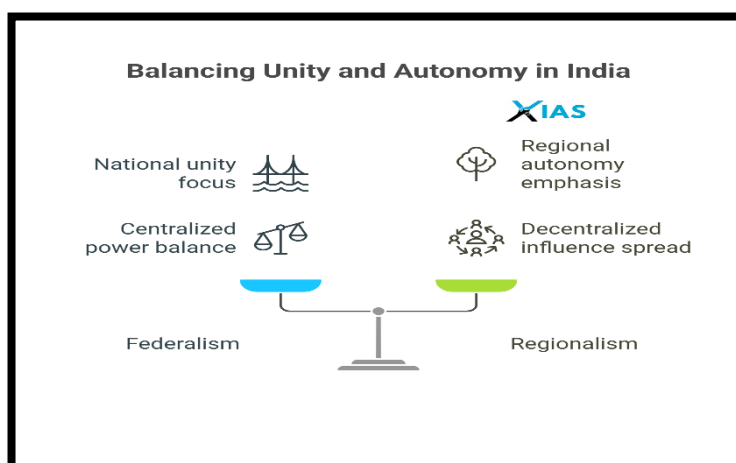
- Regionalism emerges as a response to:
 - **Perceived cultural, economic, or political marginalization**
 - **Imbalanced resource allocation**
 - **Demands for administrative autonomy**

While regionalism finds **legitimate space within federalism**, its extreme forms—such as secessionism—challenge the integrity of the federal system.

4. Tensions Between Regionalism and Federalism

A. Centralization of Power vs. Regional Aspirations

- **Example:** The abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir (2019) intensified regional debates over **autonomy vs. national sovereignty**.
- States like Tamil Nadu, Punjab, and West Bengal have opposed **central laws like NEET (National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test)** on grounds of violating regional legislative competence.



B. Fiscal Federalism and Revenue Devolution Disputes

- 15th Finance Commission (2021–26): Southern states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu contested the use of **2011 population** in devolution formula, arguing it penalizes states with better population control.
- **Data (2024–25 Budget)**: Uttar Pradesh received ₹1.3 lakh crore in tax devolution; Kerala received only ₹24,000 crore, triggering debate on fiscal equity.

C. Governor's Role as Central Agent

- Misuse of **Article 356 (President's Rule)** and **delayed assent to state bills** create friction.
- **Example**: Tamil Nadu's 2024 Assembly Bill on NEET exemption pending with the Governor for over 9 months.

D. Language and Cultural Autonomy

- The promotion of Hindi under **Article 351** is often perceived as dominance by non-Hindi states.
- **Recent Issue**: Protests in Northeast and Tamil Nadu against compulsory Hindi in schools under the National Education Policy 2020.

5. Harmonizing Regionalism Within Federalism: Suggestions

A. Strengthen Inter-State Mechanisms

- Regular meetings of the **Inter-State Council** and revival of **Zonal Councils** for consensus-building.
- **Punchhi Commission (2010)**: Recommended limiting the discretionary powers of Governors and strengthening the federal dialogue.

B. Fiscal Balance with Equity

- Finance Commissions must integrate **performance-based grants**, not just population and area.
- Expand **Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF)** to address inter-district and intra-state disparities.

C. Promoting Cultural Federalism

- Encourage **multi-lingual governance** and local curricula aligned with regional histories.
- **Example**: Telangana government's official use of Urdu alongside Telugu promotes inclusive identity.

D. Decentralized Planning and Cooperative Schemes

- Integrate state-specific concerns into centrally sponsored schemes.
- **Model**: PM-DevINE (Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-East) launched in 2022 is tailored to local priorities.

E. Institutional Safeguards

- Codify norms for Governor's assent timeframes.
- Allow **greater fiscal autonomy** for states on borrowing limits under FRBM (Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management) Act with flexibility for emergencies.

6. Best Practices

- **Kerala's participatory planning** model (People's Plan Campaign) integrates local voices in state-level development.
- **Northeast Border Accords** signed in 2023–24 (e.g., Assam-Meghalaya, Assam-Arunachal) resolved decades-old disputes through inter-state cooperation rather than judicial intervention.

7. Conclusion: Regional Diversity as a Federal Asset

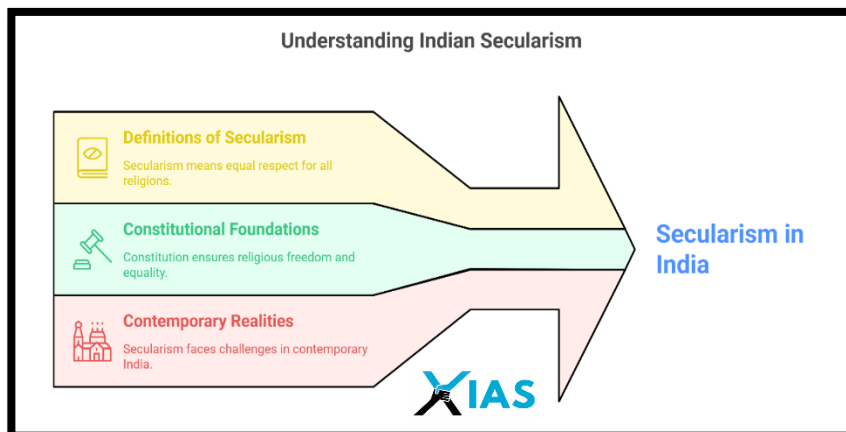
Federalism is not a ceiling on regional aspiration, but a **platform for shared governance**. When regionalism is celebrated within the bounds of constitutional values, it deepens democracy. But when used as a **tool of confrontation**, it threatens the cooperative spirit.

The Indian model must evolve towards "**federal nationalism**" where **diverse regions co-own the national mission**, instead of competing with it.

Section 7: Secularism in India – Definitions, Constitutional Foundations, and Contemporary Realities

“Secularism in India is not indifference to religion but equal respect for all religions.”

— Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru



1. Introduction: Why Secularism Matters in India
India, home to **diverse faiths, languages, and cultures**, chose secularism not merely as a political ideology but as a **survival necessity**. In a society where **religion is deeply interwoven with identity**, secularism ensures a peaceful, democratic order. Indian

secularism is unique it neither promotes religion nor detaches completely from it but ensures **equal treatment and respectful distance** from all religions.

2. Definition and Meaning of Secularism

- **Secularism** refers to a system where the **State has no official religion** and does not favor or discriminate against any religion.
- In the **Indian context**, secularism means:
 - **Equal treatment of all religions** by the State
 - **Freedom of conscience and religion** to all individuals
 - **State's right to intervene in religious matters** to ensure equality and reform

This differs from the **Western model**, where secularism means strict separation of religion and state (e.g., France's *Laïcité*).

3. Constitutional Provisions on Secularism

- **Preamble** (42nd Amendment, 1976): Declares India a "**Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic**"
- **Article 25:** Guarantees **freedom of religion**
- **Article 26–28:** Provide rights to religious denominations, religious education, and bar religious instruction in state-funded institutions
- **Article 14 & 15:** Prohibit discrimination on grounds of religion
- **Article 51A(e):** Duty of every citizen to promote harmony among all religious groups

4. Features of Indian Secularism

- **Principled Distance Model:** Indian State maintains neutrality but intervenes when religion violates human rights or equality.
- **Positive Engagement:** The State may fund religious institutions for secular purposes (e.g., minority scholarships).
- **Equal Respect (Sarva Dharma Sambhava):** All religions are treated with dignity and equal protection under law.

5. Key Challenges to Indian Secularism (2024–25)

A. Communal Politics and Electoral Polarization

- **Definition:** Use of religion to mobilize electoral support.
- **Recent Issue:** Election Commission of India issued multiple notices during 2024 Lok Sabha elections over use of religious rhetoric in campaigns.

B. Hate Crimes and Targeted Violence

- **Definition:** Violence motivated by religious identity.
- **Official Data:** NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) 2023 shows a 14% rise in communal incidents.
- **Case Study:** 2023 Haldwani communal clashes over 300 families displaced, sparked debates on illegal demolition and religious targeting.

C. Misuse of Anti-Conversion Laws

- Several states have passed laws against "forced conversion", but vague definitions have led to **harassment of interfaith couples**.
- **Example:** UP's Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion Ordinance (2020) saw over 400 arrests by 2023, most without convictions.

D. Religious Intolerance in Social Media

- Surge in hate speech via digital platforms.
- **IT Rules Amendment 2023** empowered fact-checking by PIB but raised concerns on freedom of expression.

6. Suggestions for Strengthening Secularism

A. Legislative and Institutional

- Establish a **National Harmony Commission** with quasi-judicial powers.
- Revise **Representation of People Act (1951)** to disqualify candidates using religion for political gains (as suggested by Law Commission).

B. Educational Interventions

- Integrate **value education** and constitutional morality into school curricula.
- Promote **civic education** that fosters inter-religious understanding from an early age.

C. Regulate Online Hate Speech

- Strengthen enforcement of **Section 153A and 295A of IPC (Indian Penal Code)** with judicial oversight.
- Platforms must publish **monthly transparency reports** (under IT Rules, 2023).

D. Judicial Monitoring of Hate Crimes

- Set up **Special Fast-Track Courts** for trial of religious violence.
- Appoint **nodal officers** in each district to monitor communal tension.

7. Best Practices and Examples

- **Kerala's "Human Harmony Circles" (2024):** Local panchayats formed interfaith committees to organize inclusive public events.
- **Telangana's Urdu as Second Official Language Act (2023 amendment):** Protected linguistic diversity and secular accommodation.

8. Conclusion: Secularism as a Dynamic Commitment

Secularism in India is not static it evolves with challenges. While the **constitutional framework guarantees neutrality**, its strength lies in **collective civic commitment**. Reimagining secularism for 21st-century India requires balancing freedom with equality, and neutrality with justice.

If India aspires to remain a **truly democratic republic**, secularism must go beyond slogans—it must reflect in policy, justice delivery, and public conscience.

Section:8- Comparative Perspective – Indian Secularism vs Western Secularism

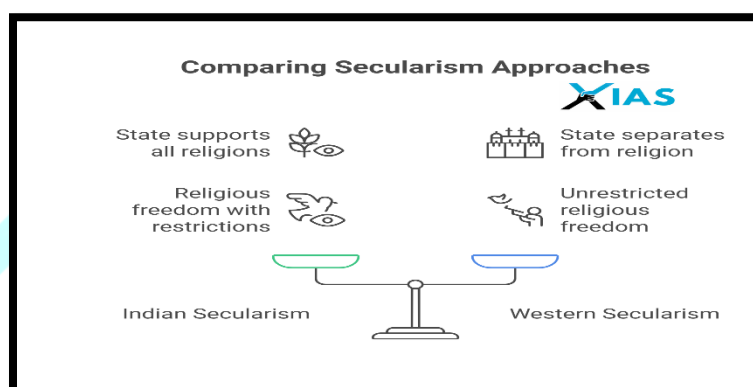
"The idea of secularism in India is not the absence of religion in public life, but the management of religious diversity with fairness."

1. Conceptual Basis

- **Western Secularism** (e.g., France, USA) is rooted in the **separation of Church and State**. It seeks to ensure **complete non-involvement of the State in religious matters**.
 - Example: France's *Laïcité* prohibits the display of religious symbols in public institutions.
 - In the USA, the First Amendment forbids the government from establishing a religion or impeding religious exercise.
- **Indian Secularism** is based on **equal respect for all religions (Sarva Dharma Sambhava)** and allows the **State to regulate or reform religious practices** if they violate constitutional values such as equality or dignity.
 - Example: The State has intervened in religious practices like *triple talaq* or temple entry for women to ensure gender justice.

2. Engagement with Religion

- **Western Model:** Seeks **strict exclusion** of religion from state functions.
 - Government cannot fund religious schools or interfere in religious practices unless there's a compelling state interest.
- **Indian Model:** Follows a **principled distance** model.
 - State can **intervene in religious institutions** to abolish untouchability, prevent superstition, or promote equality.
 - State also **supports religious communities** (e.g., Haj subsidy until 2018, funding for Waqf boards, management of temples).



3. Constitutional Structure

- **Western Democracies:** Explicit legal boundaries between religion and state institutions.
 - US Constitution's Establishment Clause.
- **Indian Constitution:**
 - Guarantees **freedom of religion (Article 25)**.
 - Provides **positive rights** to religious groups (Articles 26–28).
 - Imposes **reasonable restrictions** in public interest (e.g., public order, morality, health).

4. Socio-Cultural Context

- **Western States:** Religious homogeneity was more prevalent during the evolution of secularism.
 - Example: France's secularism emerged against the backdrop of the Catholic Church's political power.
- **India:** A **pluralistic, multi-faith society** where religion is deeply linked to identity, culture, and public life.
 - Hence, secularism must navigate and **balance religious freedom with social justice**.

5. Criticism and Contemporary Debates

- **Western Models:** Increasing backlash against immigrants and visible religious symbols (e.g., ban on hijab in France).
- **India:** Rising concern over **majoritarianism, politicization of religion, and communal violence**, raising questions about the **erosion of secular ethos**.

6. Conclusion: Contextual Secularisms

There is **no universal model of secularism**—each evolves from its history and social conditions. The Indian model is **adaptive**, recognizing that **mere separation is not enough in a multi-religious society**—instead, it must ensure **substantive equality, freedom of conscience, and harmony**.

To sustain its pluralistic democracy, India must **strengthen secular institutions, curb communal politics, and uphold the constitutional spirit of inclusive governance**.

Final Conclusion: Social Empowerment, Communalism, Regionalism and Secularism

“The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.” — Franklin D. Roosevelt

The themes of **social empowerment, communalism, regionalism, and secularism** form the **foundation of India’s social and constitutional democracy**. They are interwoven with our national ethos of **justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity**, and determine how inclusive, pluralistic, and equitable the Indian society remains in the face of 21st-century challenges.

While **social empowerment** represents India’s aspiration to uplift every marginalized and vulnerable group through affirmative action, welfare programs, and representation, it must be accompanied by **grassroots participation and institutional accountability**. The success of any empowerment lies not only in policies but in their reach, responsiveness, and results.

Communalism and regionalism, if left unchecked, can **fracture national unity and erode democratic integrity**. These are not merely law-and-order issues but structural and political problems stemming from identity-based mobilization, underdevelopment, and governance failures. The solution lies in **inclusive development, transparent institutions, and early conflict resolution frameworks** supported by civil society, media, and the judiciary.

Secularism, as enshrined in the Indian Constitution, is **not a passive neutrality but an active commitment** to equal treatment of all faiths and protection of fundamental rights. It is India’s civilizational strength, not a political slogan. To preserve this, **educational reforms, legal safeguards, and political will** are indispensable.

In an age of social media misinformation, economic inequality, and rising identity-based politics, these themes are **not theoretical constructs, but living realities** that shape the aspirations, security, and dignity of every Indian. The future of Indian democracy depends on **transforming empowerment into entitlement, diversity into harmony, and constitutional ideals into everyday practice**.

Keywords

Social Empowerment – Process of creating an enabling environment for marginalized communities to exercise their rights, capabilities, and dignity, through access to opportunities, representation, and justice. **Intersectionality** – Concept that various forms of social stratification (caste, gender, class, religion) interrelate and create overlapping systems of disadvantage or privilege. **Affirmative Action** – Constitutional and legal provisions (like reservations) designed to promote the inclusion of historically disadvantaged groups such as SCs, STs, and OBCs. **Inclusive Federalism** – Federal structure that accommodates the diverse regional, linguistic, and cultural identities of India through decentralization, autonomy, and cooperation. **Communal Polarization** – Deliberate division of communities on religious lines, often for political mobilization, leading to breakdown of social trust and secularism. **Secular Constitutionalism** – A form of governance where the state respects all religions but does not favor any; reflected in Articles 25 to 28 and the Preamble. **Ethnic Regionalism** – Regional demands or movements arising from ethnic or linguistic identity, often seen in North-East India (e.g., Bodo, Naga assertions). **Principled Distance** – Indian approach to secularism where the state can engage with or disengage from religion depending on context and justice-oriented considerations. **Civic Nationalism** – Idea that national identity is based on shared values, institutions, and the Constitution—not on ethnicity, language, or religion. **Religious Pluralism** – The peaceful coexistence of multiple religions in a society; deeply rooted in Indian tradition and essential for secular democracy. **Empowerment Gap** – Difference between the legal recognition of rights and the actual realization or access to those rights among vulnerable communities. **Regional Chauvinism** – Excessive regional pride that may lead to exclusionary politics, conflict with migrants, and challenges to national unity (e.g., Sons of Soil movements). **Majoritarianism** – A political philosophy where the majority imposes its will on minorities, undermining democratic pluralism and secularism. **Social Cohesion** – A society's ability to maintain unity while accommodating diversity and addressing inequalities. **De-communalization of Politics** – The process of removing religious identity-based appeals from political campaigns to safeguard democratic secularism.

Model Mains Question

Q. "Communalism and regionalism pose serious challenges to the ideals of secularism and social empowerment in India. Discuss with reference to recent developments. Also suggest measures to uphold constitutional values in a diverse society."

1. Introduction

Begin with a sharp quote or definition, e.g.:

"Secularism and social justice are not goals to be achieved once—they are values to be preserved every day in India's plural society."

Define all three concepts in 1–2 lines:

- Communalism: politicization of religion.
- Regionalism: region-based identity politics.
- Social Empowerment: enabling the marginalized with dignity and rights.

2. Body**A. Linkages and Challenges**

- Communal violence disrupts social justice efforts (e.g., 2020 Delhi riots' impact on minorities).
- Regionalism leads to exclusion (e.g., local job reservations threatening unity).
- Undermines trust in secularism, rule of law, and constitutional morality.
- Disempowers minorities and weakens federalism.

B. Examples

- Hate crimes, misuse of social media (official NCRB reports), regional agitations (e.g., Maratha reservation protests).
- Judicial interventions like *S.R. Bommai case* upholding secularism.

C. Suggestions

- Strengthen the Election Commission to curb hate speech.
- Promote civic education on constitutional values.
- Implement recommendations of the **Sachar Committee** and **National Integration Council**.
- Support local civil society efforts for inter-faith and inter-region dialogue.

3. Conclusion

End with a constructive and forward-looking message:

"India's strength lies not in uniformity, but in unity through diversity. Upholding secular and inclusive governance is not just a constitutional duty—it is a civilizational imperative."