



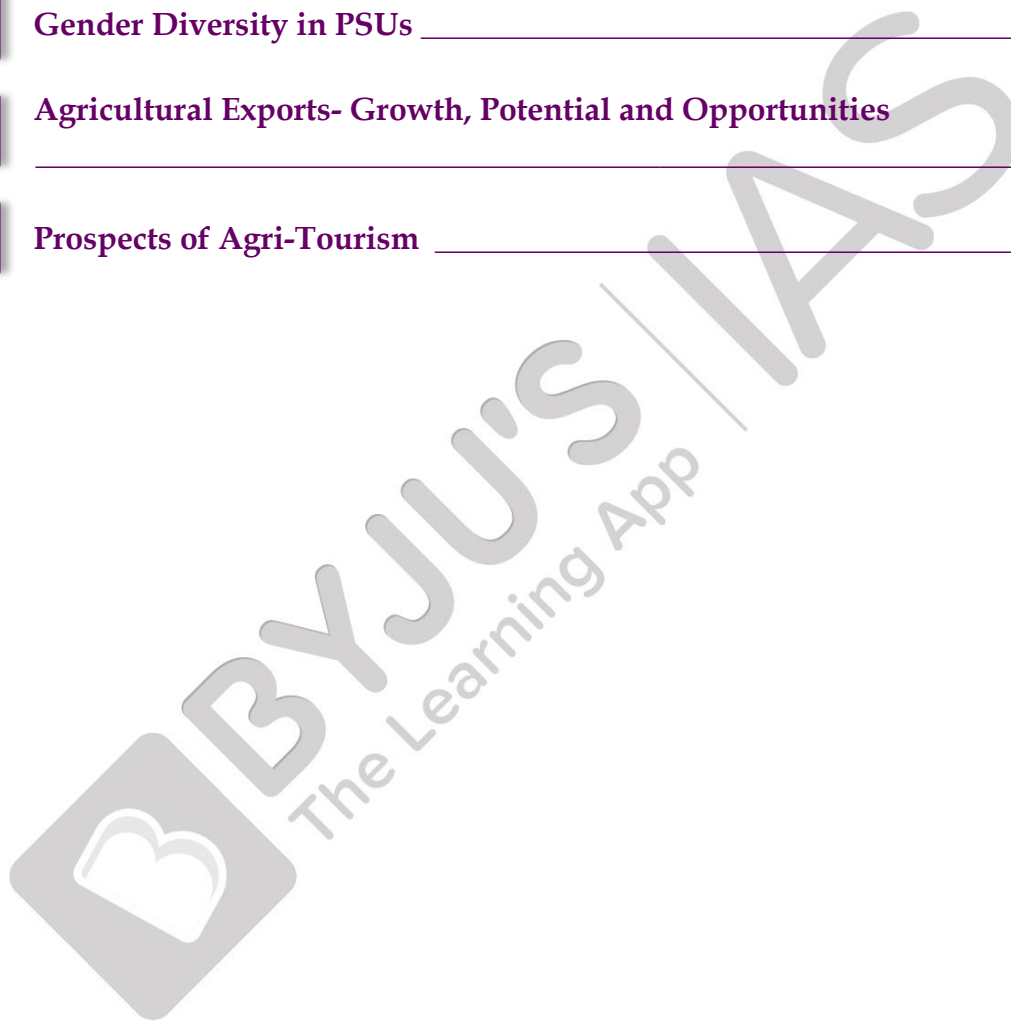
YOJANA AND KURUKSHETRA

Webinar Handout

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Yojana (September 2021) and Kurukshetra (August 2021)

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1. Fighting Femicide

Context: According to the **National Commission for Women**, there has been a spike in the crime against women especially after the lockdown was imposed.

What is Femicide?

- Femicide is an act of killing women because of their gender.
- It is motivated by misogyny and prejudice against women.
- For a case to be considered as femicide, there must be an implied intention to carry out the crime and a demonstrated connection between the crime and the gender of the victim.
- Various crimes can be considered as a case of femicide such as sexual murders, female foeticide, domestic violence and witch hunting.

Mains

GS Paper I

- Role of women and women's organization
- Social empowerment

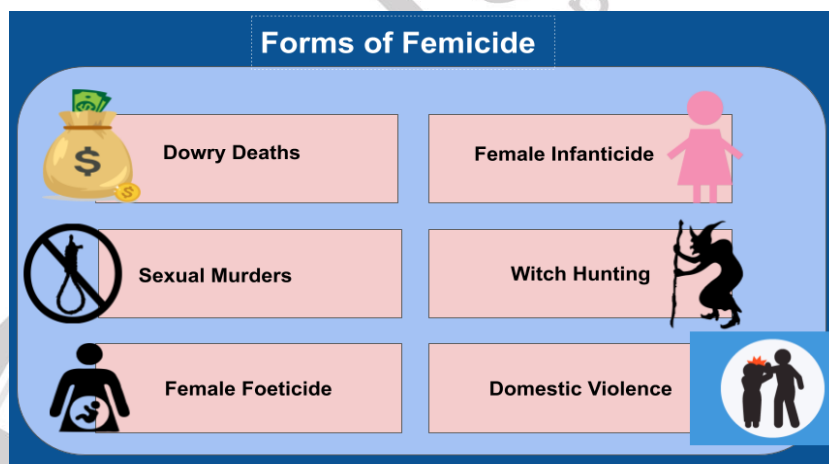
GS Paper IV

Ethics

- Attitude

Status of Crime Against Women:

- Almost 35% of women have faced some form of violence during their lifetime.
- There is a 53% rise in crime against women in 2020 after a lockdown was imposed.
- According to the National Family Health Survey, 34% of women have experienced violence between the age group 15-49.
- 92.9% of cases of crime against women are pending in city courts.
- An estimated 10 million female foetuses have been aborted over the past two decades.



Forms of Femicide

- **Domestic Violence:**
 - For many women, **home does not represent a safe and protective unit**, rather it enforces wider pattern of **gender discrimination and legitimises violence** as a method for controlling and subjugating women.
 - During the **lockdown**, **Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence cases have doubled** according to the National Commission for Women (NCW).
- **Dowry Deaths:**
 - According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), every hour one woman dies because of dowry.
 - Dowry is a cultural practice that had started to support newly married couples however, gradually it turned into a corrupt social practice asking for gifts and money in the name of marriage.

- **Sex Selective Abortion:**
 - It is an insidious form of violence as it prevents the girl child from being born because of its gender.
 - About 6.8 million lesser female birth would be recorded across India by 2030 due to persistent usage of selective abortion, as per a research.
- **Witch Hunt:**
 - **It is a search for persecution of persons accused of witchcraft.** Normally women are accused of witchcraft and beaten to death even today around the world including India. Witchcraft is the exercise or invocation of alleged supernatural powers to control people or events.
 - According to the **National Crimes Record Bureau** witch-hunting is on the rise in some states. The NCRB data for 2019 revealed that Chhattisgarh with 22 murders was on top of the list and Jharkhand was ranked third in witch-hunting cases and recorded 15 murders related to the crime.

Responses to Femicide:

- **Laws and Policies:** Efforts are being made by the law enforcing agencies to effectively implement laws such as the **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961** and **Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, (PCPNDT) 1994.**
- **Women's Organizations:** Various women's organisations and NGOs are working towards agendas such as **counselling of women, helping them learn about their rights, government initiatives** as well as providing platforms to make a living.
- **Government Initiatives:** Various initiatives have been taken up by the government for social and political empowerment of women such as **33% reservation in the seats for women in the local self-governments** to further the cause of gender justice and gender-friendly governance.
- **Social Media:** The citizenry has become quite **proactive and vocal** about any incidences of violence against women on social media platforms like twitter and Instagram, for instance the **#metoo movement where women opened up about sexual abuses they had encountered in their pasts.**

Approaches Required to Address Femicide

- **Legislations for Violence against Women**
 - There is a need for robust regulations for holding the perpetrators of crime against women accountable as well as addressing structural gender discrimination and socio-cultural legitimization of violence against women.
- **Increasing Budgetary Allocation:**
 - There is a need to ensure proper budgetary allocation and effective utilization of budget to build resilient infrastructure and increase the capacity of the law enforcement agencies to curb violence and crime against women.
- **Sensitization of Police Personnel**
 - Inadequate training to the police personnels often leaves them with little understanding of the violence against women and the way they should response to such crimes.
 - Hence, police must be sensitized and properly trained with respect to the entire spectrum of women related crimes.
 - Sensitization is imperative to remove the influence of social structures of gender bias and discrimination.
- **Support Services for Women**
 - Increasing support services for women can strengthen infrastructure by increasing shelter homes and improving medical facilities.
 - Infrastructure provides an alternative to women to leave the violent environment and create a safe life.
 - Support services help in making women aware about their rights and legislations enacted to protect their rights.

- **Addressing Patriarchy**

- Patriarchy coupled with misogyny is the root cause for perpetuating violence against women.
- Therefore there is a need to take strong efforts like engaging with local communities, building connections with community leaders and developing educational programmes on women's rights.
- Such initiatives at ground level would enlighten both men and women about women's rights as well as the consequences of committing crime against women.

Conclusion:

The issue of femicide is a blot on humanity and is keeping us away from achieving the Sustainable Development Goal-5 of achieving Gender Equality. Therefore there is need for concerted and comprehensive efforts for bringing a change in the society.

Q1. Which of the following statements with respect to 'Femicide' is/are correct?

- (a) Femicide is a phenomenon in which female farmers have been increasingly using pesticides on the farm.
- (b) Femicide is an online platform launched to track the crime against women across the world.
- (c) Femicide is a prejudiced and targeted killing of women because of their gender.
- (d) Femicide is an event of mass killing of women that happened during the feminism movement.

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Femicide is an act of killing women because of their gender. It is motivated by misogyny and prejudice against women. For a case to be considered as femicide, there must be an implied intention to carry out the crime and a demonstrated connection between the crime and the gender of the victim.

Q2. What is Femicide? Discuss various forms of femicide and different approaches to address it.

(250 Words, 15 Marks)



2. SHGs and Women Empowerment

Context:

Recently, the Prime Minister participated in the 'Atmanirbhar Narishakti Se Samvad' and interacted with women Self Help Group (SHG) members/community resource persons promoted under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM).

About the SHG:

- SHGs are voluntary associations of economically poor, usually drawn from the same socio-economic background and who resolve to come together for a common purpose of solving their issues and problems through self-help and community action.
- So far, 5.6 crore rural women have been mobilised into 68 lakh SHGs under the National Rural Livelihood Mission.
- The government aims to create a total of 75 lakh SHGs by 2022 to enable more women to get a livelihood.

Mains

GS Paper I

- Role of women and women's organization
- Social empowerment

GS Paper II

- Development processes and the development industry the role of NGOs, SHGs, various groups and associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders
- Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections
- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Background of SHG-led Women Empowerment Drive

- **1984:** For the first time in India, the concept of social mobilisation and business development through the organisation of SHGs was introduced based on **Prof. Yunus's 'Grameen Bank' model.**
- **1992:** NABARD, in 1992 along with empanelled Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) formed the SHG Bank Linkage Project, which is today the world's largest microfinance project.
- **1993 onwards:** NABARD, along with the Reserve Bank of India, allowed SHGs to open savings bank accounts in banks. SHGs were accepted as group-based clients of banks for both deposit and credit linkages, collateral-free lending, and lending to groups without specification of purpose/project.
- **1999:** On the recommendation of **Prof. S. R. Hashim (1997) committee**, Swarjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) was launched to provide self-employment to below the poverty line households through the formation of SHGs to bring them out of poverty from 1999 to 2011.
- **2011:** To change the top-down approach of SGSY and Institutionalisation of the SHG movement as recommended by **Prof. R. Radhakrishna (2009) Committee**, SGSY was restructured into the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) which was launched on 3rd June 2011.
- **Currently**, the NRLM has been renamed as Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY- NRLM).

DAY-NRLM & Women Empowerment

- DAY- NRLM has twin objectives of
 - (a) Organising rural poor women into SHGs
 - (b) Constantly nurturing and assisting them to take up economic activities.
- Since 2013-14 a cumulative credit of Rs. 3.56 lakh crores has been availed by the Women SHGs from banks to take up income-generating activities.
- The **key emphasis** of the scheme for women empowerment is on:
 - **Universal social mobilisation** to include all 9 crore target households.
 - **Institution-building** i.e. a 3-tier structure, 'SHGs' at the ward level, 'Village Organisations (VOs)' at the village level, and 'Cluster Level Federations (CLFs)' at the cluster/ block level.
 - **Universal financial inclusion.**
 - **Increasing existing livelihood options** for the member of SHGs.
 - **Inculcating the entrepreneurial spirit** to empower them psychologically, socially, economically and politically.

- The SHG movement follows five principles or '*Panchasutra*'
 - Regular Meetings
 - Regular Savings
 - Regular Inter-Loaning
 - Timely Repayment of Loans
 - Up-to-date books of Accounts.
- In addition, five additional principles (together called '*Dasha Sutras*' under DAY-NRLM) now followed by SHGs are
 - Health, Nutrition, and Sanitation
 - Education
 - Active involvement in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)
 - Access to Entitlements and Schemes
 - Creating Opportunities for Sustainable Livelihoods.

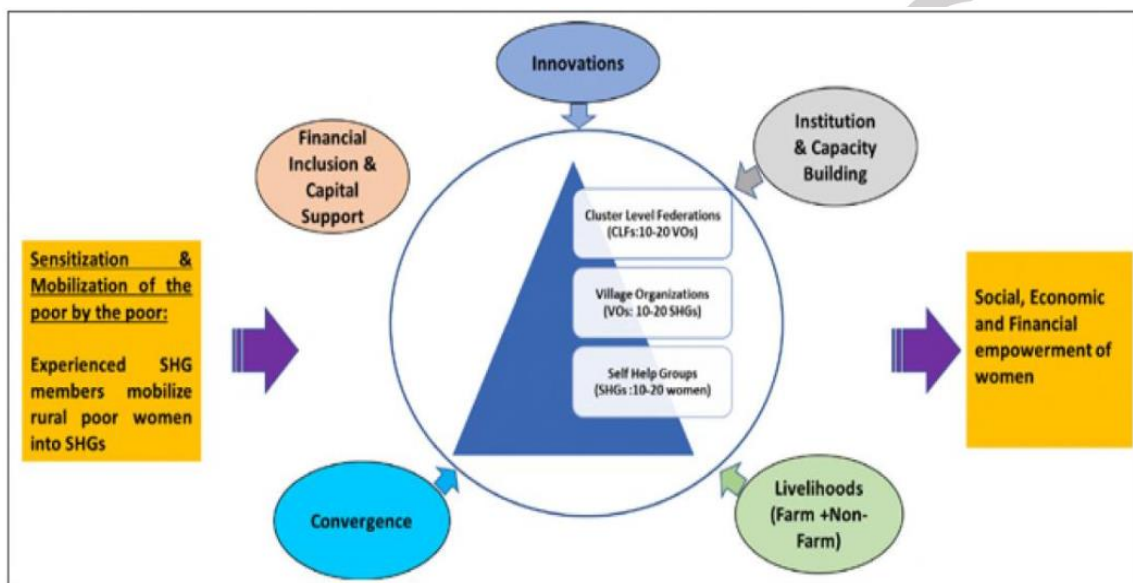


Figure: Key Features of DAY-NRLM and Institutional Structure of SHGs
Source: Yojana

Women Entrepreneurship and Economic Progress through SHGs:

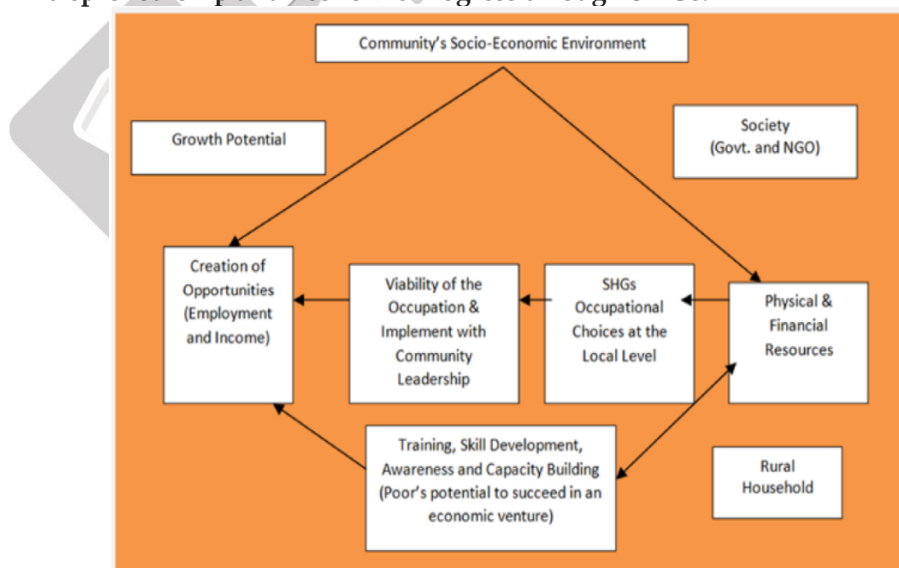


Figure: Economic Progress through SGHs
Source: Yojana

DAY-NRLM & Empowering Process

- The empowerment processes of the women members of the SHGs are embodied in the four pillars of the DAY-NRLM scheme.
- **1st Pillar: Social mobilisation**, Formation, and Promotion of sustainable institutions of the poor.
 - So far, **5.6 crore rural women have been mobilised into 68 lakhs SHGs**; 2.93 lakh primary (VOs) and 25,467 secondary level federations (CLFs) have been promoted under NRLM.
 - These community-based organisations adhere to core principles of democratic governance and financial accountability, participate effectively in local governance and development, mediate livelihood concerns and social issues affecting the poor members on a 24*7 basis, facilitate access of the poor to entitlements and public services.
- **2nd Pillar: Universal Financial inclusion** through demand and supply-side interventions.
 - **Demand-side interventions:**
 - Promotion of effective book-keeping
 - Provision of capital support to SHGs;
 - Creating a culture of prompt repayments of loans
 - Financial literacy and counselling
 - Support for the micro-investment plan for repeat finance
 - Institutionalising Community Based Recovery Mechanism (CBRM), etc.



Figure: Step-wise gradual processes leading to Financial inclusion of SHG

Source: Yojana

- **Supply-side Interventions:**
 - Formation of sub-committees of State-level Bankers Committee (SLBC) in all States;
 - Bankers' sensitisation on concept, practices, and requirements of SHGs through exposure visits, workshops, and training;
 - Positioning of Bank Sakhis in all bank branches;
 - Promoting alternate models for delivery of banking services in remote areas;
 - Facilitating regular conduct of credit committee meetings from Block to State levels;
 - Mitigating risks through insurance coverage, etc.
- **3rd Pillar** of women empowerment: **Livelihoods**
 - Here poor households are made capable of making sustainable farming/ non-farming income and coping with vulnerabilities - debt bondage, food insecurity, health crisis, and migration.
 - Around 35.88 lakh women farmers were supported for livelihood empowerment undertaken under **Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)** through the following activities:
 - Sustainable agriculture
 - Organic farming
 - Promotion of NonTimber Forest Produce (NTFP)
 - Strong capacity building architecture

- Value chain intervention
- Custom hiring centres
- NRLM has created community-led livelihood extension services with the help of about 31,889 Community Resource Persons (CRPs).
- The scheme empowered women SHGs to take up non-farm livelihood activities too.
 - **Start-Up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP) promoted rural startups in the non-farm sector.**
 - The initiative has supported 1.82 lakh entrepreneurs in 125 blocks since 2015.
 - A total of 30,352 enterprises have been set up under SVEP so far.
- **4th Pillar: Social inclusion and Convergence:** Platforms established by SHGs are leveraged for better implementation of multiple public welfare schemes/programmes.

Village level Entrepreneurship and SHGs under DAY-NRLM

- The village entrepreneurship development approach of DAY NRLM is aimed at creating a catalytic local entrepreneurial ecosystem and encouraging the rural unemployed youth to take up local enterprises on their own.
- Focus on the mobilisation of more SHGs and taking their support services for the creation and operation of the rural farm and non-farm infrastructure would help improve rural livelihoods and income.
- The new and innovative rural enterprises scheduled to be established under DAY-NRLM have the potential to
 - (a) **Ensure financial inclusion of SHGs & farmers**
 - (b) **Increase household income**
 - (c) **Assure training, placements to the millions of rural youths**
 - (d) **Facilitate farm and non-farm logistics at the community level.**

Constraints and Issues in SHG programmes:

- **Social mobilization:** Identification and inclusion of the poor for obtaining scheme benefits has remained a challenge
- **Promotion of institutions of the poor:** Lack of conceptual clarity on the legal framework of the federations, deviations in the perceived role and forms of CLFs, and low competency of CLF board members in managing business
- **Training, capacity building, and skill up-gradation:** Lack of appropriate training plans, quality training materials, and availability of expert training institutions have impacted SHGs' capacity-building initiatives.
- **Financial inclusion:** Lack of uniform financial management systems at all tiers of SHGs has impacted growth in the bank accounts, improvement in the financial literacy, and absorption capacity of community members.
- **Multiple & diversified livelihoods:** Livelihood activities are more for a consumptive purpose. The commercial purpose of it, along with market/ forward linkages, is largely missing.

Conclusion:

SHGs are not only the backbone of the Women empowerment drive of the Government but also possess the potential to actualise the vision of the Prime Minister to move from the concept of women empowerment towards **Women-led Empowerment**.

Q.1 Self Help Groups have become the vehicle of women empowerment. In this context discuss the challenges faced by SHGs in attaining their aim? **(15 Marks 250 Words.)**

3. Gender Diversity in PSUs

Context:

Recent study "Corporate India: Women on boards" by Institutional Investor Advisory Services (IIAS) and SBI Mutual Fund revealed that Gender diversity continues to be low in the Central Public Sector Undertakings even in Maharatna PSUs.

What is Gender Diversity?

In simple words, it generally means an equal representation of men and women but can also include the inclusion of other genders other than female and male.

What is Gender Diversity in the Workplace?

Gender diversity in the workplace is the equal treatment, acceptance and promotion of both females and males in an organization.

General Barriers to the Advancement of Women in the Organisations:

- Under-representation of women in organisations and in leadership roles is because of systemic, attitudinal, and situational barriers as shown in the infographic given below:

Mains

GS Paper I

- Role of women and women's organization
- Social empowerment

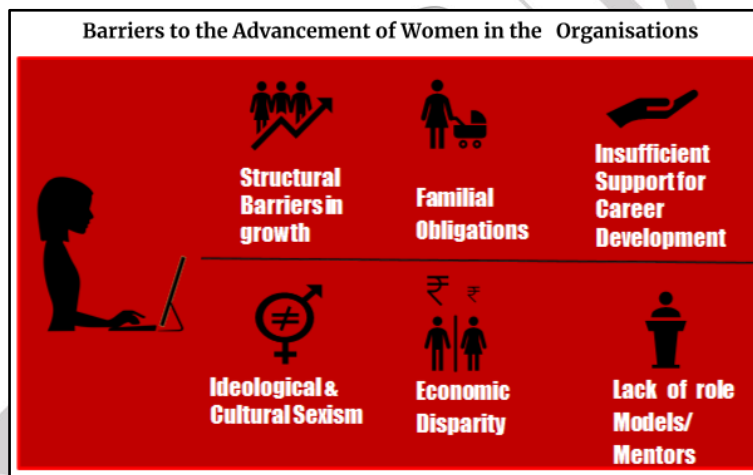
GS Paper III

- Inclusive growth

GS Paper IV

Ethics

- Attitude
- Corporate governance
- Work culture, Quality of service delivery, challenges of corruption.



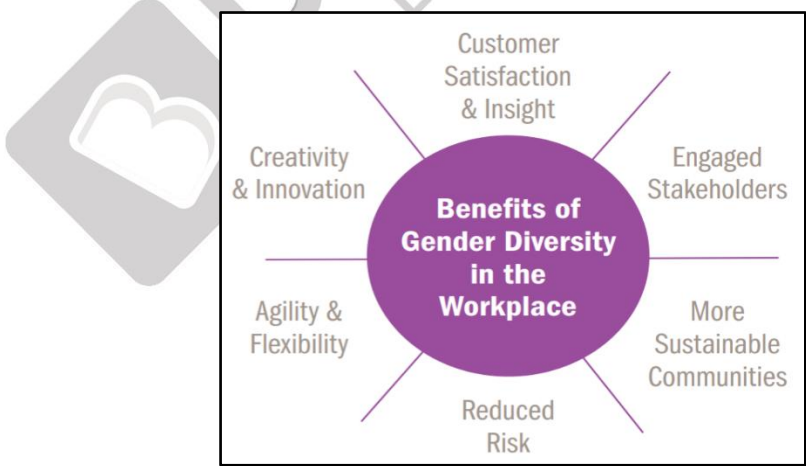
Status of Gender Diversity in Employment in India:

- The study "Corporate India: Women on boards" evaluated the board composition of NIFTY 500 companies.
- Women Directors accounted for 17 per cent (777) of the total directors (4,657) on NIFTY 500 companies' boards.
- Data reveals that the number of women at below board level is also far from equitable.
- **Status in Public sector undertakings:**
 - Multinationals have a higher representation of women at 19 per cent, while PSUs trail behind at 11 per cent.
 - In the 4,657 firms in the NIFTY 500, 13 companies did not have any women directors. Of those, 12 are PSUs.
 - Overall, just 8 of the 71 PSUs have boards that comprise more than 20 percent of women.
 - The study finds that despite improvements in the form of retention, maternity benefits, safety, and security at the workplace for women in PSUs, there is a lack of focus on developing a female talent pipeline.
 - This state of affairs is despite the regulatory push provided by **The Companies Act, 2013 which made it mandatory to have at least one woman director on boards with effect from 2014.**

- A committee set up by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) to look into '**Gender empowerment in PSUs**' gave the following data
 - The average percentage of **women employees in Maharatnas** in the last 3 years is **only 7.4%**.
 - The number of women Directors was very low in almost all PSUs, and **several of them did not have a single woman Director** as shown below.

Importance of Gender Diversity in PSUs in India

- **The Corruption and Gender linkage:**
 - **Globally**, there is growing realisation among Global anti-corruption bodies about the **inverse relationship between gender diversity and corruption**.
 - For example, **the G-20 Anti-corruption Working Group** has resolved to take concrete actions to deepen its understanding of the linkages between gender and corruption under its 2019-21 Action Plan.
 - **In India** the **Central Vigilance Commission** also shares the same view. It strongly feels that the gender gap in the public sector undertakings needs to be narrowed by taking affirmative action to reduce corruption.
- **Other Benefits of a Gender Diverse Workforce for any organisation:**
 - Increasingly, evidence is showing that **organizations that respect and value the diversity brought by both women and men are more successful at attracting and retaining high performers and improving operational performance**.
 - A diverse workforce can help organizations:
 - Address skills shortages
 - Attract and retain the best employees
 - Reduce the cost of employee turnover
 - Enhance organizational performance
 - Improve access to target markets
 - Minimize legal risks
 - Improve customer insight and satisfaction
 - Enhance an organization's **reputation**
 - Improve the economic advancement of women
 - Engage stakeholders and **promote partnerships**
 - Improve creativity, agility and loyalty.



Source: gov.nl.ca

Issues in PSU with Respect to Gender Diversity

SCOPE Survey and Report: A 2017 study on Women in Leadership and Management in Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) in India was conducted by the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) (an apex body of 201 PSUs representing mainly Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in India) in collaboration with the International Labour Organization.

The main findings of the report are as follows:

- **Narrow Base of Recruits:** There is a less number of women applicants and recruits at the entry-level which gets reflected at a higher level
- **Stereotypes Among Men:**
 - Men perceive women to be less enthusiastic to take up transfer postings or serve long at field site locations due to family responsibilities.
 - Men also felt that women are likely to lag in knowledge skill development due to career breaks for maternity or child care.
- **No Time Bound promotions in PSUs:**
 - In PSUs, promotions at higher levels are not time bound; at higher levels, employees apply for promotions against vacancies.
 - These vacancies are usually of sites or field offices generally located in remote areas.
 - For women employees, such far-off postings may come at a time when they are making critical life cycle choices (such as getting married, pregnancy, giving birth, raising a child, and so on), and hence they forgo promotions.
- **Informal Work culture:** Women also feel that as they do not socialise informally with seniors in the organisation they may be left out or ignored for key positions where selection is based not on seniority alone.
- **Lack of confidence and organisational support:** Women who were surveyed believed that the two most influential factors that stand out in women's career advancement include: 'women's confidence and self-belief, and 'organisational opportunities' supporting women in their professional development and career growth.

Analysis of 2020 NTPC Committee on Women Empowerment in PSUs:

- **Issue in Recruitment:**
 - It observed that women perform well in written exams, but their final selections are comparatively lower than men. **For example**, out of applicants from the same gender the chances of getting an interview call for an Executive trainee post in NTPC is three times higher for men.
 - And after the interview/GD the percentage of women further falls.
 - The committee observed the **reason as gender bias among the evaluators of the Interview and GD process** and subjective nature of these processes.
- **Issue in Promotion:**
 - It observed that the percentage of women executives in PSUs kept dropping at a successively higher level.
 - This is because of **Mid-career breaks** that women employees take due to household responsibility and life choices. And the **merit-based promotion system** of PSUs treats these breaks adversely.
- The committee took cognizance of the fact that adequate gender sensitisation exercises are lacking in many institutions.
- Statutory requirements of the **Prevention Of Sexual Harassment at workplace Act** are not followed in spirit.

Suggestions by the NTPC gender committee 2020 to improve the gender diversity in PSUs

- The committee gave its recommendations relating to Recruitment, Promotion, Training, Work and Performance, Gender sensitisation, and for specific Policy Interventions to bring about structural changes in the system:
- **Recruitment:**
 - **Short Term and Medium Term**
 - All selection may be purely based on test scores and interviews may be avoided.
 - In case interviews are part of the selection procedure, a woman representative may invariably be a member of the selection committee.
 - Pre-condition to obtain qualifying marks in the interview may be done away with.

- Adequate endeavours to hire more women in lateral induction, especially in service functions like HR, Finance, IT, Legal etc. might lead to improved women representation in PSUs.
- **Long Term:**
 - **Affirmative actions** to reach at least a 30 per cent strength of women workforce
 - **Increasing the Upper age limits for recruitment** and introducing Fixed-term inductions to facilitate women joining the workforce even after completing the child care responsibilities.
- **Mentoring and Training**
 - In all training programs conducted by PSEs, a pro-rata percentage of women employees of that PSE may be nominated for equal opportunity.
 - Specific training interventions for women employees may be taken up.
 - Mentoring at induction level/mid-career level may be made compulsory in all organisations by seniors.
- **Gender sensitisation:**
 - **Gender Sensitisation** may be included in **induction and mid-career training** as a compulsory module to all employees.
 - **An Internal Complaints Committee should be set-up** in every place where there are more than 10 employees, **irrespective of their gender.**
- **Specific Policy Interventions**
 - **A large-scale awareness generation program** to highlight the incentives and safety measures may be undertaken.
 - **Extension of basic hygiene facilities** like toilets and **other safety facilities** like CCTVs, security guards, commutation of women employees, etc. as laid down in the Occupational Health And Safety Code guidelines may be ensured.
 - **Intra and inter PSU transfer posting for spouses** at the same station to enable women employees to discharge their family obligations as well. At least one woman member in all promotion committees.

Conclusion:

PSUs being government undertakings should be the role models in gender diversity at the workplace. Also, it can leverage gender diversity to improve its efficiency, reduce corruption and improve its work culture.

Q1. Which of the following statements regarding Gender diversity in Indian companies is *incorrect*?

1. Public Sector Undertakings have a higher representation of women while multinationals in India trail behind.
2. The Companies Act, 2013 made it mandatory to have at least one woman director on boards with effect from 2014.
3. Maharatna PSUs have a 50 percent women workforce.

Select the correct answer from the codes given below:

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The study "Corporate India: Women on boards and the NTPC gender committee report 2020 evaluated the Indian companies wrt to gender diversity.

Statement 1 is incorrect: Multinationals have a higher representation of women at 19 per cent, while PSUs trail behind at 11 per cent.

Statement 2 is correct: The Companies Act, 2013 made it mandatory to have at least one-woman director on boards with effect from 2014.

Statement 3 is incorrect: Maharatna PSUs have around an average of 7 percent women employees. Not 50 percent.

- Q.2 Studies have revealed the dismal performance of public sector companies with regard to gender diversity. In this context, discuss the importance of gender diversity in public sector companies in India. (15 Marks. 250 Words)



4. Agricultural Exports- Growth, Potential and Opportunities

Context:

As per various experts, Covid 19 has unveiled India's vast potential in agricultural export especially when it comes to horticultural produce, processed products and herbs of medicinal value.

Mains

GS Paper 3

- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.
- Agriculture

Background:

- India is predominantly an **agrarian nation** contributing significantly to the **world's food basket**.
- India is blessed with **20 agro climatic regions, 15 major climate types and 46 soil types**.
- It produces a variety of crops for both **domestic and international markets**.
- India is the **largest producer of milk, pulses, spices, cashew and jute** while the **second largest producer of wheat, rice, fruits and vegetables, sugarcane and cotton**. However, India's share in global export doesn't match its potential and opportunities.
- India's share in **global agricultural exports** was merely **2.27 percent in 2017**.
- At present, **India is among the top ten global agricultural exporters**, however, it has the potential to be among the top five as per the World Trade Centre.

Rank World agri-exports	Country	Bn \$		% of GDP
		Export Value 2016	GDP 2016	
3	Brazil	77	1796	4%
6	Indonesia	38	932	4%
7	Argentina	37	546	7%
8	Thailand	37	407	9%
10	India	34	2264	2%

Figure: India's rank in world agricultural exports

Source: Business World

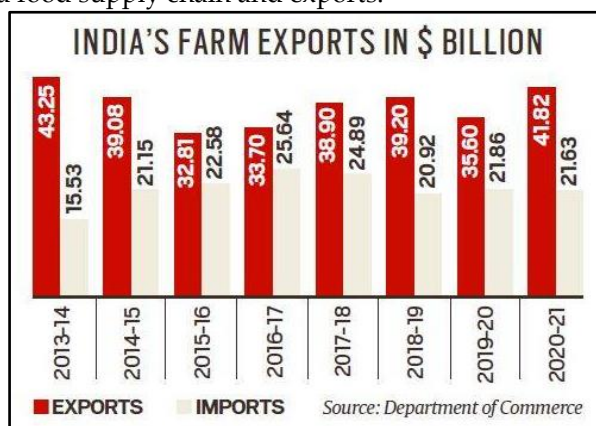
Institutional Mechanism for Agricultural Exports in India:

- **The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA):**
 - It is the chief agency primarily responsible for the export promotion and development of listed agriculture, horticulture, dairy and livestock products.
 - APEDA runs a special promotional scheme to promote exports under which it provides financial assistance for infrastructure and quality development along with market promotion.
 - APEDA conducts several outreach programmes with buyers and sellers to understand common issues and to resolve them.
- **Department of Commerce:**
 - Under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the department of commerce develops strategies and policies for increasing agricultural foreign trade.
- **Ministry of Food Processing Industries:**
 - It gives leverage to agri exports by focusing on value chain, value addition and logistics.
- **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare:**
 - It focuses on enhancing production, quality improvement and creating opportunities for exports.

The Growth Story of Agri-Exports:

- **Post Independence Growth:** The value of agri exports in 1950-51 was Rs 149 crores which rose tremendously to 2.53 lakh crores in 2019-20.
- **Net Exporter:** According to the Economic Survey 2019-20, India has been a net exporter of agri products since the 1991 reforms.
- **Varied Export Products:** India is known to export a variety of agri products ranging from marine products, basmati rice, spices, oil, to raw cotton, sugar and tea.

- **Success despite Covid 19:** Despite the hardships and restrictions due to the pandemic, India maintained its world food supply chain and exports.



- **Meeting Specific Demands:** India has met specific demands from other countries. For instance, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) has exported 50,000 MT wheat to Afghanistan and 40,000 MT of wheat to Lebanon.
- **Expansion of Cereal Export Footprint:** India has started exporting cereals like wheat, rice and others to newer destinations. For instance, **the first consignment of 'red rice' was flagged off to the USA.**
 - Red rice is an iron-rich rice grown in the Brahmaputra valley in Assam.
 - It is locally known as 'Bao Dhaan'.
- **Surge in Export of Fruits and Vegetables:** India has been exporting a variety of fruits and vegetables mainly due to demand driven diversification in export basket and exploration of new destinations.

Policies for Promotion of Agri-Exports:

- **Comprehensive Action Plan/Strategy:**
 - The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has prepared an extensive policy for promoting agricultural trade.
 - The policy has done a detailed analysis and exploration of issues such as pre production, post production, harvest management, export and market potential.
- **Export Promotion Forums**
 - Agri-product specific Export Promotion Forums (EPF) have been set up under the ambit of APEDA.
 - EPFs facilitate, support and provide solutions to challenges faced by the exporters.
- **Agriculture Export Policy:**
 - The Department of Commerce came up with an extensive Agriculture Export Policy (AEP) with the target of doubling the agri-exports.
 - The policy also emphasises on diversification of the export basket, promotion of organic and ethnic agri products and boosting high value agricultural exports.
- **Policy Recommendations:**
 - **Development of Robust Infrastructure** has been recommended, therefore the government has initiated the development of **mega food parks**.
 - Along with this, major renovation works of ports have been going on for providing **24*7 custom clearance to avoid wastage** of horticultural perishable produce.
 - Creation of **agri-export zones (AEZs)** has been recommended under the AEP.
- **Digital Portals:**
 - The Department of Commerce has created a **portal for trade analysis**.
 - APEDA and The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) are operating **agri-exchange and fish-exchange portals**.
 - The Federation of Indian Export Organisations runs an **Indian Trade Portal** for providing information related to tariff scenarios.

Opportunities for Agri-Exports

- **Increase in Consumption of Vegetables:** There has been a massive spike in the consumption of vegetables in the USA and other developed countries because of their nutritional properties.
- **Covid 19 induced Demand:** The demand for certain immunity boosting products has increased from the developed countries due to Covid 19. For instance, India has exported huge amounts of **turmeric, ginger and gherkin (a variety of cucumber) during Covid 19.**
- **Increase in Demand of Processed Food:** The demand for processed products has been on the rise due to the fast paced nature of the world. Hence, India can grab the opportunity for adding value to its fruits and vegetables.



Source: India Briefing

- **Potential of Spices:** At present, spices hold a major share of 37% in total export value from horticultural exports, however, their potential is still untapped. The Spice Board has been taking steps to promote special spices like saffron from Kashmir and ginger from Karnataka, Sikkim and Assam.
- **Demand for Organic Produce:**
 - People are becoming more and more aware about their health and wellbeing. Hence there is a surge in demand for organic products.
 - India has been boosting organic farming through initiatives like Pradhan Mantri Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana.
 - Experts have also recommended creating '**Organic Product Export Zones**' in the north east regions to boost organic product exports.
- **Leveraging India's Medicinal Plants:** India has the world's largest resource of medicinal plants. However, India's share in the world herbal trade is still low as compared to its potential.

Challenges Associated with Agri-Exports

- **Pesticides and Chemical Residue:** Consignments of Indian food exports get rejected due to higher residue levels. Basmati rice, grapes and mangoes are a few products that have suffered.
- **Quality Produce:** Assuring quality produce is a challenge as the safety and quality compliance are not effectively put in place and also the farmers are not aware about the minimum global standards.
- **Transport and Logistics:**
 - The Indian Agri Value Chain from 'farm to plate' also suffers from various gaps like lack of proper transportation and logistics which creates an additional burden of wastage and spoilage of agri products.
 - Thus, the initiative of 'Kisan Rail' for transporting agri produce is a step in the right direction.
- **Agri-Infrastructure:** At present, Indian agriculture faces severe shortage of cold storage, good connectivity, efficient markets, etc which act as a major hurdle towards agri exports.
- **Awareness Level:** Another major challenge is ignorance and lack of awareness among the farming community about the usage of pesticides, technology and government initiatives to promote crop production and value addition.

Way Forward:

- **Ensuring quality compliance:** Quality should be assured by imparting training to the farmers regarding usage of pesticides.
- **Infrastructure: Building a strong, robust and resilient supply chain** with minimal gaps for efficient export of agri products.
- **India's Strengths: Leveraging on India's strengths like organic farming, herbal medicinal plants and fruits and vegetables** to cater to the emerging global demand in light of covid 19.
- **Awareness: Massive Awareness drives** for the local farming community to focus on growing high value and remuneration fetching crops.
- **Vocal for Local: Promoting Local and cultural crops** on the line of 'red rice' and 'saffron' along with building brands to increase their export potential.

Conclusion: Food is the **backbone of human survival** and India must tap into its full potential of being the **'nourisher of the world'** with a comprehensive effort at national, institutional and most importantly at the farming community level to fulfil the **Sustainable Development Goal 2 of zero hunger** along with **the target of doubling of farmer's income.**

Q1. With regards to the agricultural exports in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. India ranks at the top position in the world in terms of agri exports.
2. During covid- 19 India witnessed a sharp decline in the exports of vegetables due to trade restrictions and lockdowns.

Select the correct answer from the codes given below:

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is incorrect: India is ranked 10th in agricultural exports, however, it has the potential to be under top five according to the World Trade Centre.

Rank World agri-exports	Country	Bn \$		% of GDP
		Export Value 2016	GDP 2016	
3	Brazil	77	1796	4%
6	Indonesia	38	932	4%
7	Argentina	37	546	7%
8	Thailand	37	407	9%
10	India	34	2264	2%

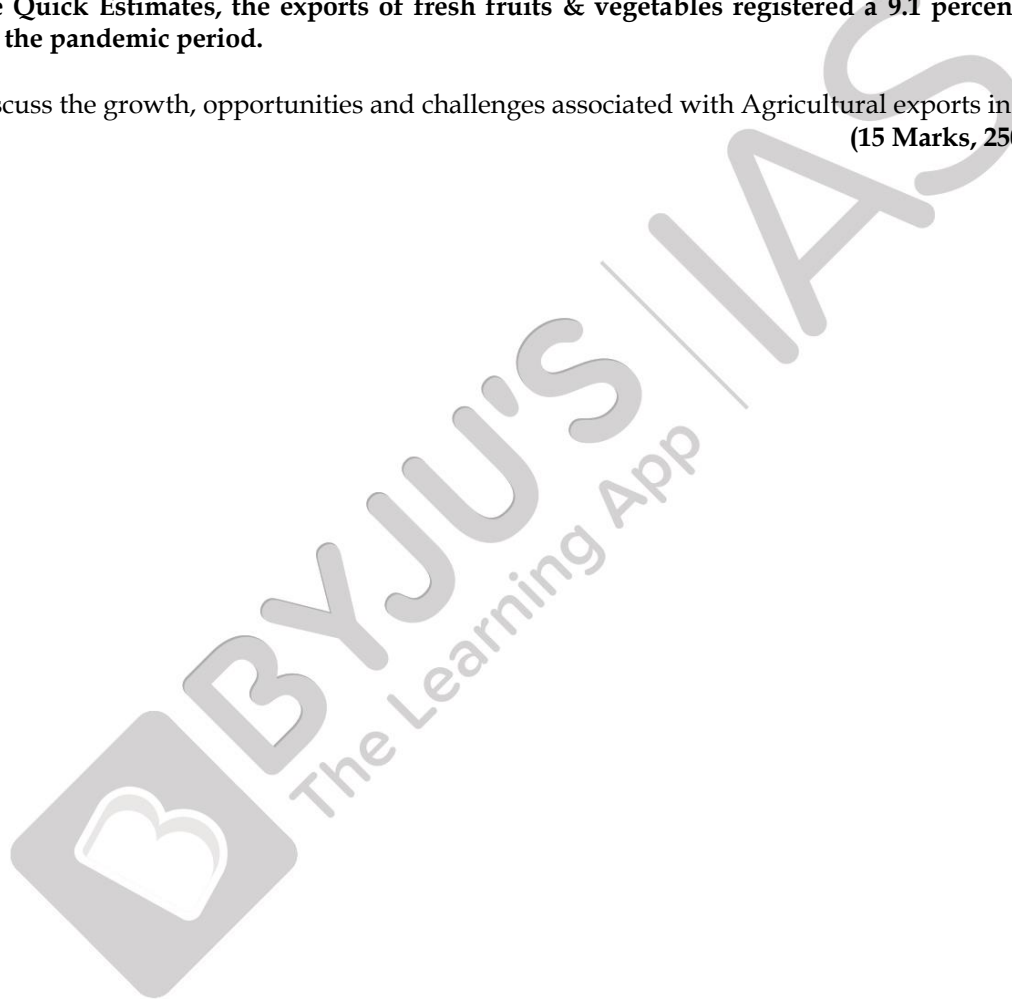
Figure: India's rank in world agricultural exports

Source: Business World

Statement 2 is incorrect: During covid 19, despite trade restrictions, India exported vegetables because of its nutritional value as there were huge demands from the USA and other developed countries. **As per the Quick Estimates, the exports of fresh fruits & vegetables registered a 9.1 percent growth during the pandemic period.**

Q2. Discuss the growth, opportunities and challenges associated with Agricultural exports in India.

(15 Marks, 250 Words)



5. Prospects of Agri-Tourism

Context

- With diversified agro-ecosystems, rich heritage in artifacts, historical facts, natural resources and infrastructure; **agritourism** has been considered as a **potential option to boost the agrarian economy** in India.

About Agri-tourism

- Agri-tourism or Agro-tourism is regarded as the **intersection of tourism and agriculture**. It can be defined as the conjunction between a working farm territory aided by a remunerative tourism unit.
- The **main focus is on increasing farm income along with providing recreation**, entertainment, and/or educational experiences to visitors.
 - **The urban people** who tour the farms, prefer to stay at a farm house, engage in farming activities, enjoy different rides like animal rides, bullock cart ride, and tractor ride, eat local food, purchase farm fresh fruits and vegetables, experience and understand the local art and culture.
 - **The farmer** maintains both farm and home for the stay of urban tourists, brings innovations to attract new tourists, sells farm produce at a remunerative price, and earns a livelihood all year round.
- In India, agri-tourism stands on **three pillars**, viz. farm recreation, farm stays and marketing of local farm produce.
 - Basic principles of agritourism are to have something for the tourists **to see, to do and to purchase**.
- An area with high rates of biodiversity and landscape diversity is ideal for the development of agri-tourism.

GS Paper 3 Agriculture

- Major cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints; e-technology in the aid of farmers

Types of Agri-tourism

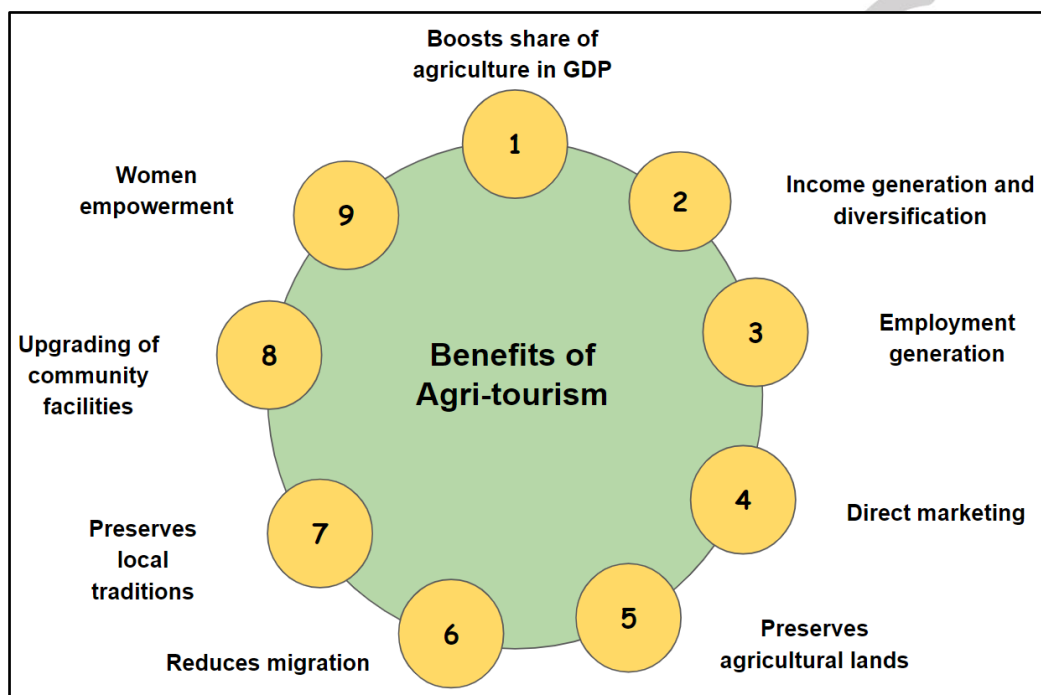
Agri-tourism can be categorized based on the type of farm setting, farm facility or experience and types of activities involved:

- **Passive contact agrotourism:** In case of passive tourists contact it restricts to accommodation, food and entertainment activities of the tourists.
- **Indirect contact agritourism:** This adds other activities like exposure of tourists to farm demonstrations and basic farm education.
- **Direct contact agri-tourism:** This includes all the above-mentioned activities as well as participation of the tourists in different farm operations like seeds sowing, planting, gardening, harvesting the produce, milking a cow etc.

Importance of Agri-tourism

- **Boosting share of agriculture in GDP:** Agri-tourism has immense potential to grow and would increase the share of agriculture in national GDP.
- **Income generation and diversification:** Agri-tourism leads to income diversification along with additional income generation for the farmers.
 - Agri-tourism can provide additional income through several means:
 - Farmers' market, where tourists can purchase farm products,
 - Picking up their own products, where tourists harvest produce by themselves,
 - Local food, where tourists prefer to have local flavor in breakfast, lunch, dinner,
 - Participation of tourists in different farm activities and other entertainment activities like animal rides, bird watching, etc.,
 - Experiencing rural life through local tours at different rural settings.
- **Employment generation:** Agri-tourism creates income and employment opportunities not only to the farmers directly but also to the rural localities indirectly.

- **Direct marketing:** Agri-tourism helps farmers in direct marketing of their farm produce to consumers.
- **Preserving agricultural lands:** Agri-tourism helps in raising public awareness about agricultural activities and related issues and values. It also helps preserve agricultural lands, thus ensuring self-reliance in food security.
- **Reduces migration:** Agri-tourism reduces the migration from rural to urban areas and attracts as well as retains the youth in agriculture.
- **Preserves local traditions:** This also invigorates the local art, craft and culture and promotes inter-regional and cross-cultural communication and understanding.
- **Upgrading of community facilities:** Agri-tourism facilitates upgradation and revitalization of community facilities.
- **Women empowerment:** With the participation of women, it also helps in empowerment of rural women while diversifying and improving the rural economy.



Therefore, it is worth saying that agri-tourism is environmentally conscious, socially responsible, culturally compatible, ethically valuable, market competitive and economically profitable.

Note:

- The **tourism sector** in India contributed to about **6.8% of the GDP** in 2019.
- In India, **agri-tourism** is growing at an average rate of **20% per annum**.
- In India, as per the Census of 2011, about 69 percent of the total population resides in villages and **62 percent** of the population **depends on agriculture** for their livelihoods.

Progress in India

- Rural tourism in India was initiated during the **10th five-year plan**. **Rajasthan and Kerala** took early advantage of this initiative.
- However, it was **Maharashtra** that became the most progressive state in implementing agri-tourism in different districts.
 - **Agri-tourism development Corporation (ATDC)** was established in 2004. Most of the tourist reservations and the visits to different agritourism centres are booked by it.

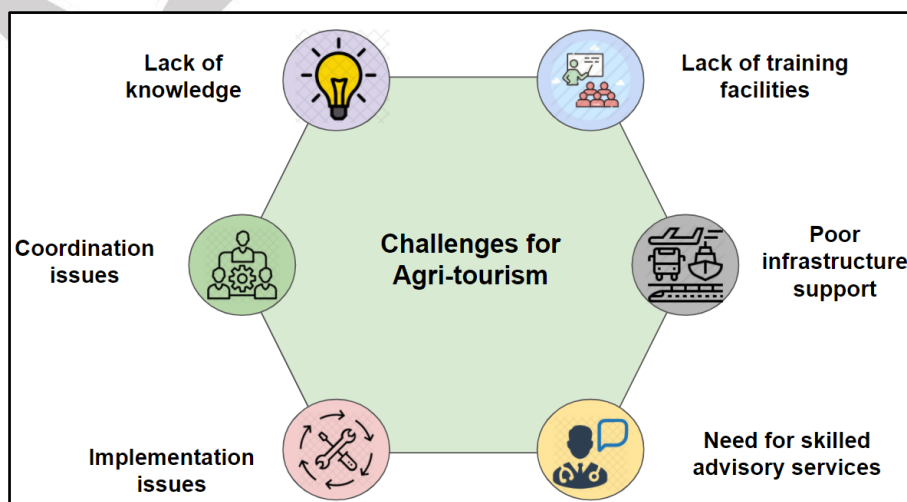
- Under Maharashtra State **Agritourism Vistar Yojana**, ATDC launched training and skills development programmes in 2007. This initiative aimed to help and conserve the village environment, traditions, culture, customs, arts and handicrafts.
- Agri-tourism was given a major lift in **Maharashtra Tourism Policy 2016** with a focus on agritourism for the small farmers, compulsory educational tours for school students and helping small farmers getting financial assistance from the Banks including NABARD to set up agritourism centres among other things.
- The Montana homestay and annual International flower festival of **Sikkim**, the spice garden tours in Kerala and Tamil Nadu are attractions for the tourists as well.

Factors driving agri-tourism

- **Affordability:** From the perspectives of the tourists, agri-tourism is least expensive with respect to travel, accommodation, food and entertainment.
- **Stress buster:** The urban people are now preferring the pollution free, less crowded, peaceful countryside to relax in the natural environment.
- **Rise of Ayurveda and organic foods:** The emerging desires for Ayurveda (a pro-nature medical approach having roots in villages) and organic foods have been visible in the health-conscious urban population. This opens up possibilities for agri-tourism.
- **Connecting to the roots:** As Mahatma Gandhi said that “India lives in its villages”, the urban population are aware about their roots in rural areas which creates desires in them to visit the countryside and stay at farm, observe farm activities and enjoy rural recreations.
- **Favorable policy environment:** It has been reflected since the 10th Five Year Plan in terms of promotion of the brand ‘Incredible India’. Budget allocation of the Tourism Ministry for 2021-22 has been increased to Rs. 2026.77 Crore as against the outlay of Rs. 1260.00 Crore approved for revised Budget Plan 2020-21.

Challenges

- **Knowledge:** Farmers don't have enough knowledge about the potential of agri-tourism.
- **Training:** There is a lack of training opportunities to learn about agritourism.
- **Infrastructure:** There is an absence of suitable infrastructure support in rural areas.
- **Advisory services:** Identification of potential farmers and entrepreneurs who can implement agritourism projects requires skilled advisory services.
- **Implementation:** In the absence of a good planning and understanding of management practices, it is a challenging task for farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs.
- **Coordination:** Agri-tourism network involves farming, medical facilities, transportation, safety aspects, media and communication, tourism agencies, government and hospitality industry. The coordination between all aforesaid services providers determines the successful implementation of agri-tourism.



Way Forward - Agri-tourism promotion Strategies

- **Recognition and support:** There is a need for proper recognition of the agri-tourism industry and supportive government policies
- **Capacity building:** Education and capacity building programmes are necessary to develop the agri-business/ entrepreneurial skills of the farmers. Training of the farmers for improvement in products and service quality; proper marketing; risk management and conflict management is also needed.
- **Cooperatives:** Formation of farmers' cooperatives can help in better implementation of agritourism.
- **Support:** Financial assistance, development of strategic partnerships and setting up location specific successful agritourism models can support the growth of agri-tourism.
- **Professional programmes:** There is a requirement for a need-based professional programme on agri-tourism.
 - The school of Agribusiness and Rural Management of the Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University, Pusa, Bihar has decided to start a Post Graduate Diploma Programme on Agri-tourism from 2021.
- **Public-private partnerships:** Accommodation availability, transport facility etc. are some of the issues that need immediate attention and these can be networked through public-private partnership.
- **Theme-based promotion:** Agri-tourism promotion needs development and popularizing thematic images of Indian farm experiences similar to tourism themes like Incredible India, Kerala tourism and Goa tourism.
- **Inclusion in existing tourism packages:** Agri-tourism needs to be an integral part of available tourism packages. This will attract visitors to rural areas as well as provide business to tourism agencies year-round.

Q1. The International flower festival, recently seen in the news, is celebrated in:

- (a) Kerala
- (b) Tamil Nadu
- (c) Sikkim
- (d) Maharashtra

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The International Flower Festival is an annual event celebrated in the Indian state of Sikkim. It features over 600 species of orchids, 240 species of trees and ferns and special species of flowers.

Q2. Agri-tourism has multitudinal benefits and has the potential of doubling farmers' income in India. In this context, discuss the challenges associated with agri-tourism in India. **(15 Marks, 250 Words)**

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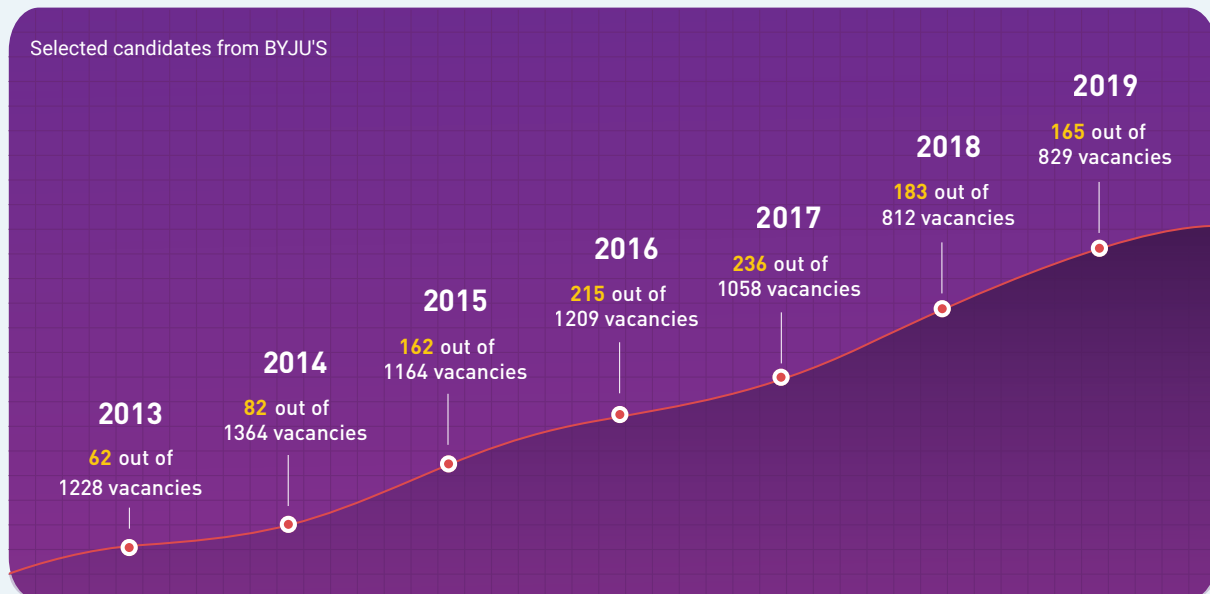
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