

NEXT IAS

RECEIVED

20 JUL 2025

GRADED ASSESSMENT TEST 2025

(To be filled by candidate)

TEST CODE : M25GAT05

TEST NO. : 05

Name of Candidate: KIRAN. KAMATE

Roll No.: MT25FLT RAO15 Start Time 12:30 PM End Time 2:10 PM

Date of Examination: 20-07-2025 Mobile No. .

Q. No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained	Q. No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
1	10		6	15	
2	10		7	15	
3	10		8	15	
4	10		9	15	
5	10		10	15	
Total Marks : 50			Total Marks : 75		

GRAND TOTAL -/ 125

EVAL CODE: GRADED DATE:

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Immediately on receipt of the QCA booklet, please check that this QCA booklet does not have any misprint or torn or missing pages or items, etc. If so, get it replaced by a fresh QCA booklet.
2. Candidates must mention all relevant details like Name, Email, Roll No, Mobile, etc. in the space allocated.
3. Candidate is expected to attempt all 10 questions within the given timeline.
4. Answers must be written in the medium authorized at the time of admission.
5. Candidates must write answers for the specific question under the respective question itself. Any answer written outside the space allotted may not be given credit.
6. Please write neatly. Avoid illegible writing.
7. Do not write/mark irrelevant matters in the QCAB.
8. Only those copies that are submitted on the date of exam till 5 pm will be graded.

REMARKS:

.....

.....

MARKING SCHEME *

Marks Per Ques	Below Average	Average	Above Average
10 Marks	Below 2.50	3.00 - 3.50	4.00 and above
15 Marks	Below 4.00	4.00 - 5.50	6.00 and above

* Subject to change without prior notice.

MACRO COMMENTS

The Purpose of evaluation@nextias.com is to provide constructive suggestions on 'How to improve Answer Writing and thereby score better marks.'

STRENGTHS OF THE CANDIDATE

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Q1. India aims to achieve 570 GW of solar capacity by 2030, surpassing its global commitments. However, to realise its full potential, India must accelerate solar expansion by addressing the major challenges faced by the solar sector. Discuss. (Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

India, recently reached 50% of total installed capacity of 482 GW through non-fossil resources. Solar energy contributed >40% to it.

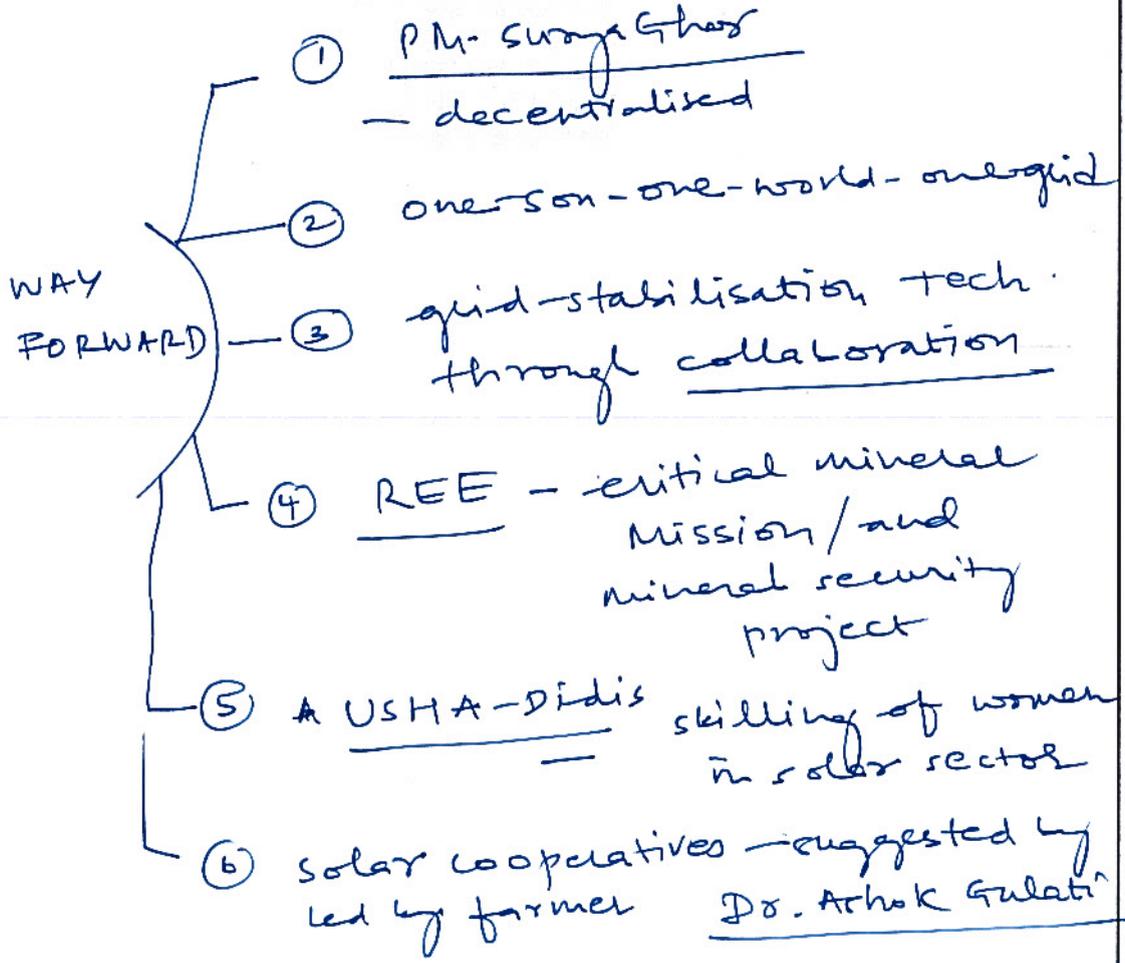
Major Challenges faced by solar sector

1. Import dependence on China for PV-cells
→ REE like lithium, strontium, gallium.
2. Lack of battery storage capacity/technology
→ leading to wastage
3. grid stability issues
→ leading to loss in net-metering
4. issue of intermittency
→ the capacity utilisation factor is just 20-25% at max.
5. Lack of decentralised solar energy production → (eg) Solar Parks are more supported.

Candidates must not write on this margin

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :

6. lack of skilling
— for indigenous production
7. Lack of awareness and enforcement
— leading to only institutional production
8. just-energy-transition
→ dependence on coal-based economy
9. Inpite of all the importance, budgetary support is decreasing



solar-energy — is the core of India's energy security and a carefully crafted collaboration is needed to achieve the target

Q2. Discuss the role of technological innovations in addressing the challenges faced by Indian agriculture. (Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

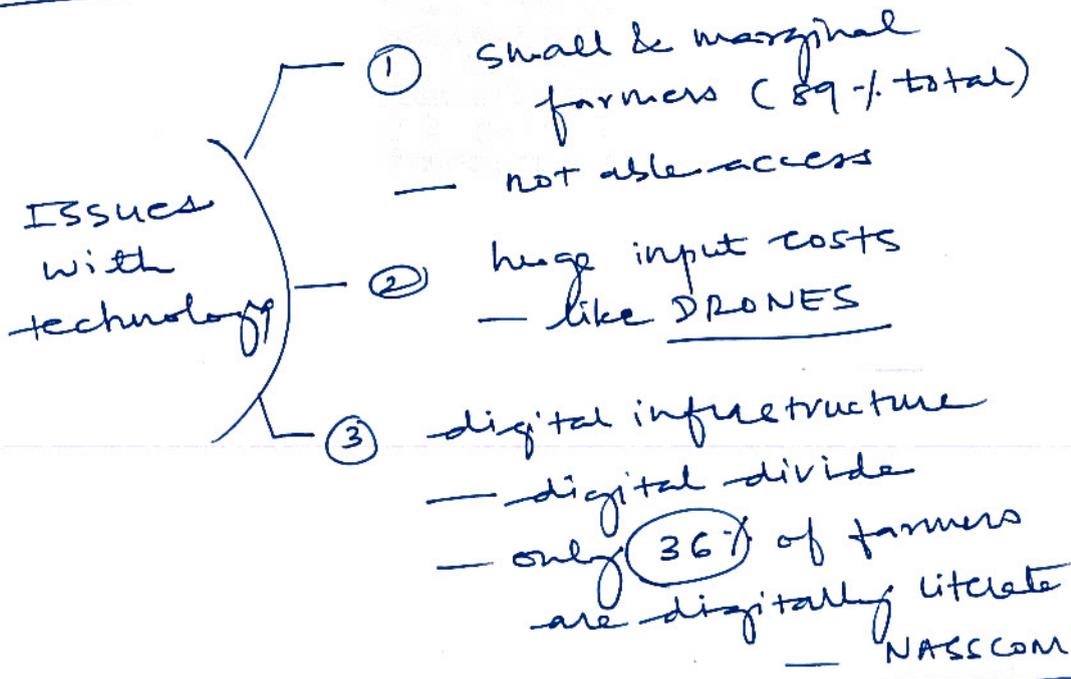
With the need of increasing productivity for a growing population's needs, technological interventions are a must.

Challenges	Tech. intervention
1. Overuse of inputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Precision Agriculture led by <u>AI</u>, <u>Drone</u>, <u>Big Data</u>. - reduce input ↓↓
2. Insurance coverage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of SWAVITMA for land record mapping + - LEDs in space to monitor the produce assessment
3. Leakages in welfare scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AEPS -adhaar-led/ enabled payment system - direct benefit transfer (DBT)
4. Intervention of intermediaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>E-NAM</u> - connects more than 1,00,000 markets. - better price discovery

Candidates must not write on this margin

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :

5. Market led prices discovery	Options and futures trading.
6. decision-making issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - m KISAN app. - e choupal - weather updates, and market info
7. lack of productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mechanisation of agriculture - Custom hiring centre

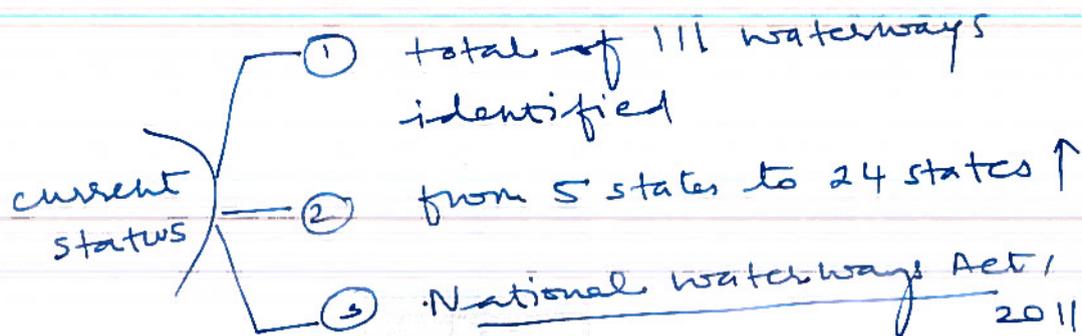


If Jai Kisan was the call of 20th century Indian Age, Jai Vigyan and Jai Anusandhan is for 21st century Agriculture.

Q3. Examine the current status of inland waterways in India and their advantages. What are the key challenges hindering the development of inland waterways in India?

(Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

India is having 14000 km+ of coastline (updated) and 7500 km of inland navigable potential [w/o Jalshakti]

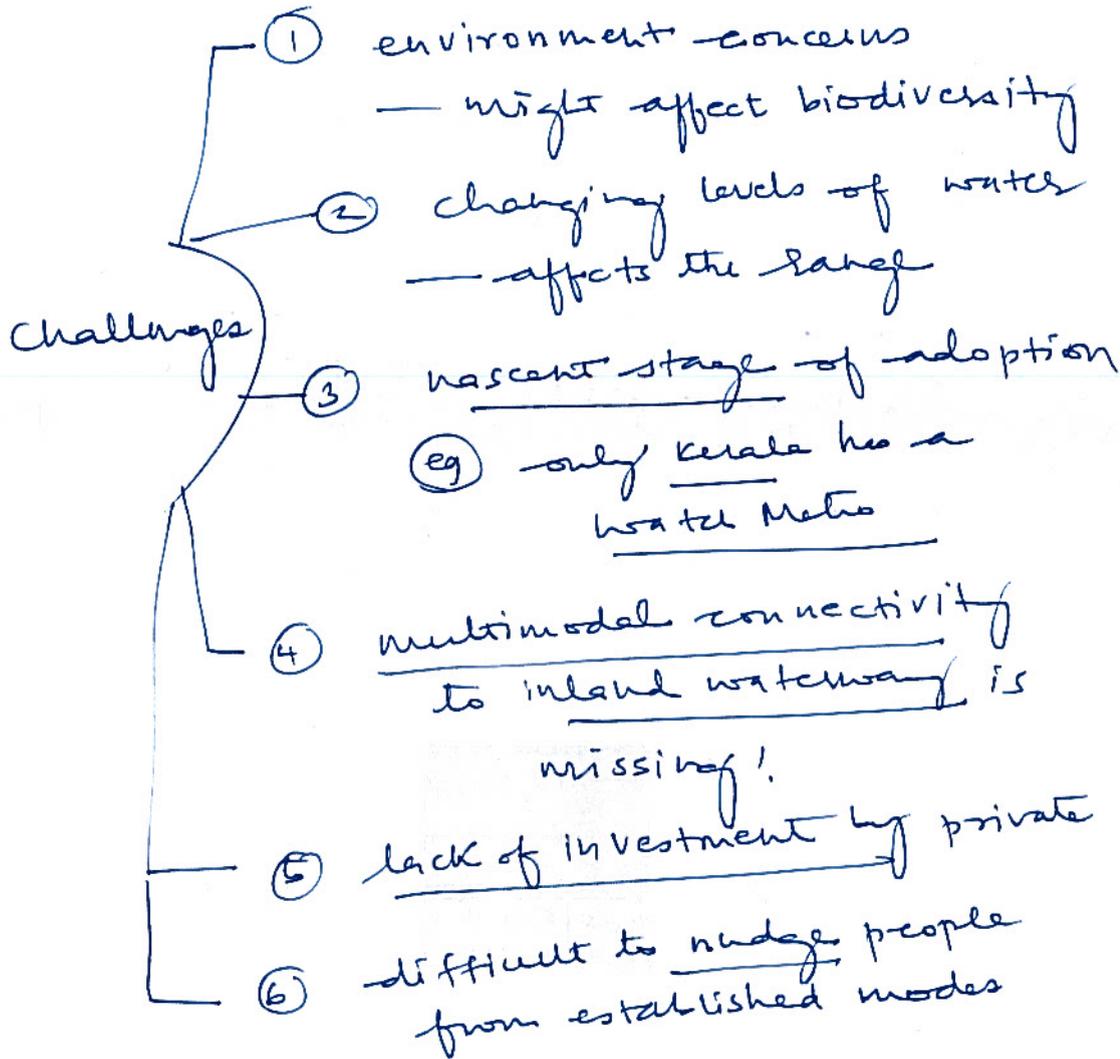


Advantages

1. Multi-modal transportation
2. less polluting compared to other modes like road transportation
3. connecting the hinterland
— disparity in development addressed
4. less time of travel
— reduces fatigue.
— saves time.
— increases efficiency.
5. capitalising the potential
— coastline and navigable area

Candidates must not write on this margin

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :



WAY FORWARD

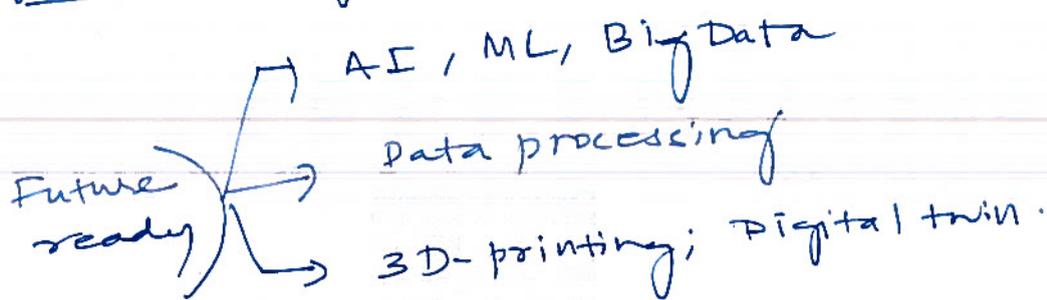
1. Sagarmala — focus should be also diverted to inland transportation
2. Learning from best practices
(eg) Amsterdam, Kerala.
3. state-centre led initiatives.
4. private investment
— attract investment.

Inland waterway, can thus enable multimodal transportation, bringing in efficiency, convenience and inclusivity.

- Q4. The Skill India Mission has recently been restructured and extended with the aim of equipping the youth with "future-ready skills." In this context, examine the achievements and challenges of the Skill India Mission in the Indian economy.

(Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

2025 marks the decade of Skill India Mission. The industry 4.0 demands restructuring the scheme for future-ready skills.



Achievements

1. included diverse no. of schemes.
 - (eg) SAMARTH, PM-Kaushal Vikas Yojana
 - SHREYAS
2. skill-mapping
 - of the population
 - identify the status of skills.
3. Recognition of prior learning (RPL)
 - recognised the skill acquired already
4. create an formally-skilled workforce ..

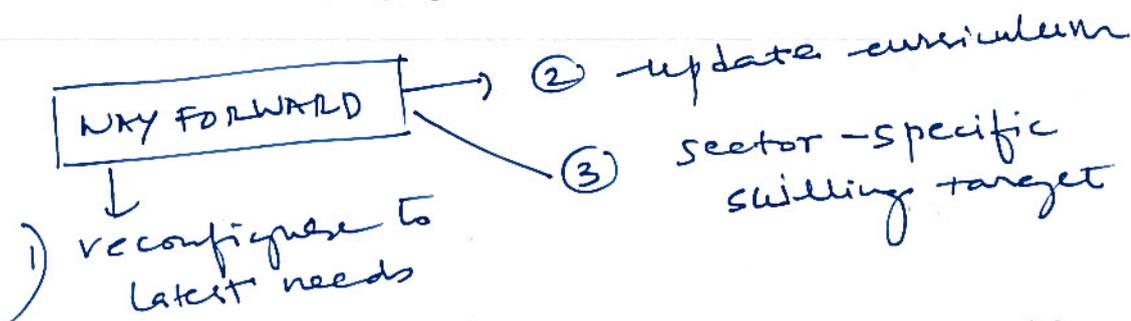
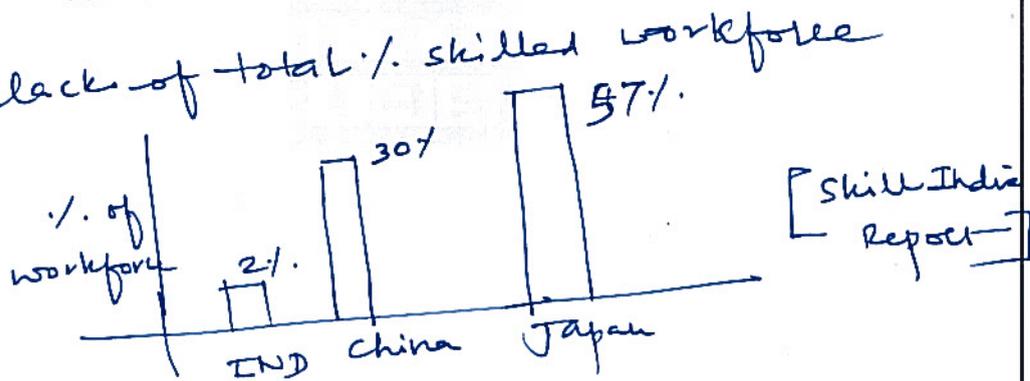
Candidates must not write on this margin

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :

5. Inclusive Skill Mission
 — women, transgenders, youth etc

Challenges

1. Lack of updated curriculum
2. skilling not matching with job creation (e) CMIE — unemployment rate is 3.5%
3. mismatch between industry-academia
 — not aligning with demands of India.
4. lack of total % skilled workforce



To convert the demographic dividend into an "economic powerhouse" skilling is the important facet, paving the way for Sabka saath, Sabka Vikas

- Q5. What is digital currency? Discuss the potential benefits of digital currency in financial transformation and the challenges associated with it. (Answer in 150 words) 10 marks

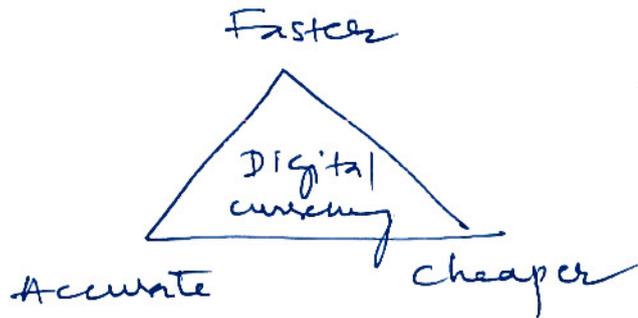
Digital currency is the digital version of currency, having the same value, but transmitted through digital medium. (eg) UPI, eRUPI.

Potential Benefits in Financial transformation

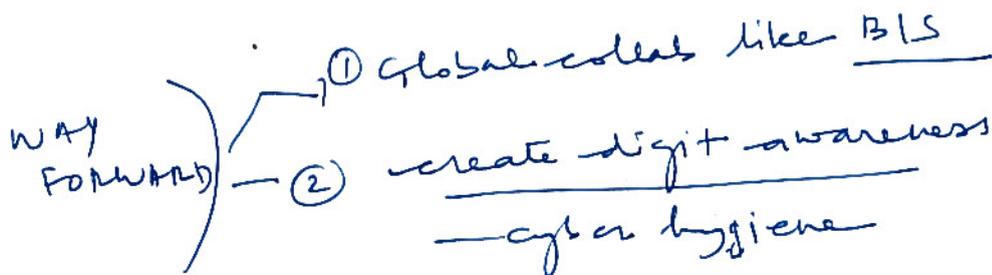
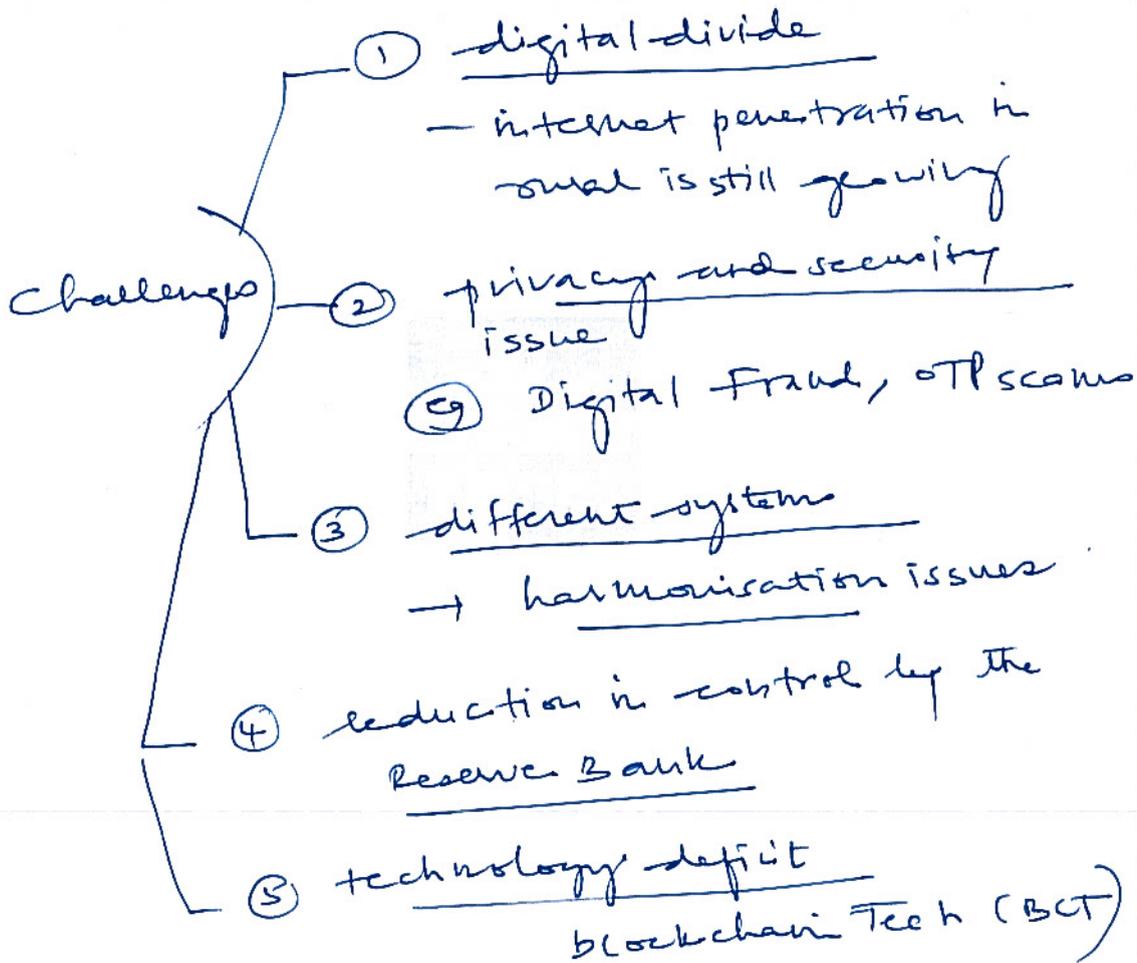
1. Increases the efficiency of fund transfer → faster, accurate, cheaper
2. Reduce leakages in welfare schemes
(eg) India reduces leakages to the potential of 80,000 cr in agriculture alone. (WB Report)
3. increase in central Bank's revenue
→ seignorage ↑↑
4. Direct benefit transfer
→ without physical barrier
5. cross-continental transfer
→ faster transactions and sales.
6. "velocity of money" — increases
— leading to more GDP ↑↑

Candidates must not write on this margin

7. connecting the backward region
 ⇒ banking the unconnected.



Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :



Digital currency - has the potential to revolution the financial system, creating a faster mode of transaction and connect the world even further degree

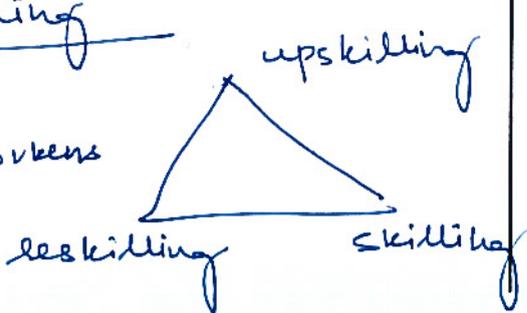
Q6. For India to raise the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP from 15% to 25%, strategic reforms and the creation of a robust ecosystem for industrial growth are essential. Comment.
(Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

The Make in India programme targets to reach 25% of GDP contribution from the manufacturing sector, from the current 17% (2023-24)

- Why raise
- ① India leaptfrogged from agriculture to services.
 - ② labour-intensive \Rightarrow create employment
 - ③ growing population: 144 cr (UNFPA)
 - ④ VIKSIT Bharat by 2047 goal.
 - ⑤ target of 7 trillion by 2030 and 5 trillion USD economy by 2027.

Strategic Reforms and creation of robust ecosystem

1. address the "inverted duty structure" \rightarrow making India's products uncompetitive
2. investing in skilling \rightarrow skill mapping, as only 2% of workers are formally skilled



3. attract private investment

→ private investment is stagnant at less than 31-32% of GDP.

→ As per NITI document, it needs to increase to 50%.

4. Budget 2025

- USME definition reform

- access to credit increased to 10 lakhs.

5. PLI scheme

→ incremental-production

→ 1.97 cr (lakhs) - investment across 20+ sectors.

6. technological intervention-needed

→ (eg) use of AI, 3D printing and Digital Twins.

→ increase labour productivity

7. Increase Capex

→ crowding-in effect.

8. Regulatory Reforms

FM talked about "peeling the onion approach" - i.e. reducing unnecessary legal barriers.

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :

9. Ease of Doing business

→ Greenfield and Brownfield project

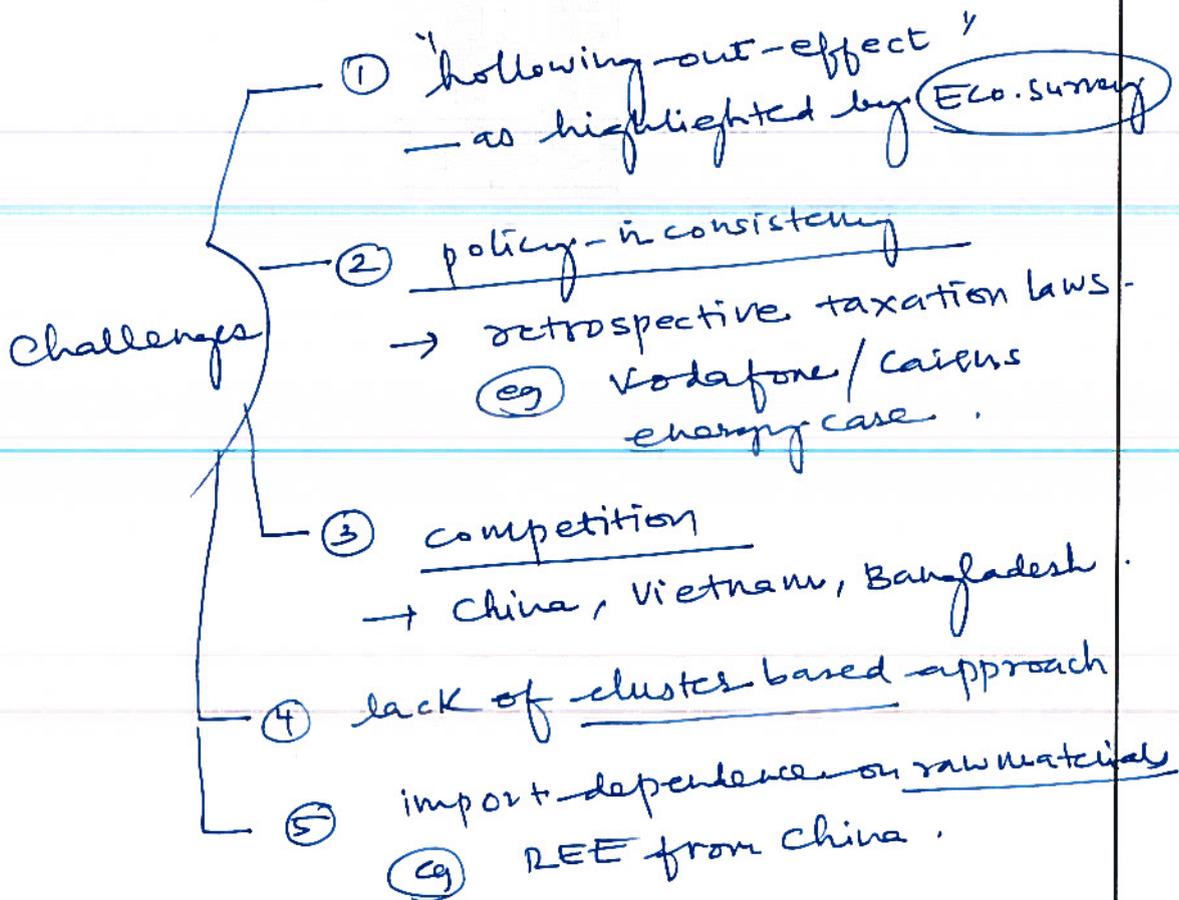
10. leveraging sunrise sectors

(eg) food processing industry - FPI
→ can create forward backward linkage.

11. logistics cost ↓

- investing in multi modal projects

(eg) Sagarmala, Bharatmala, inland transportation

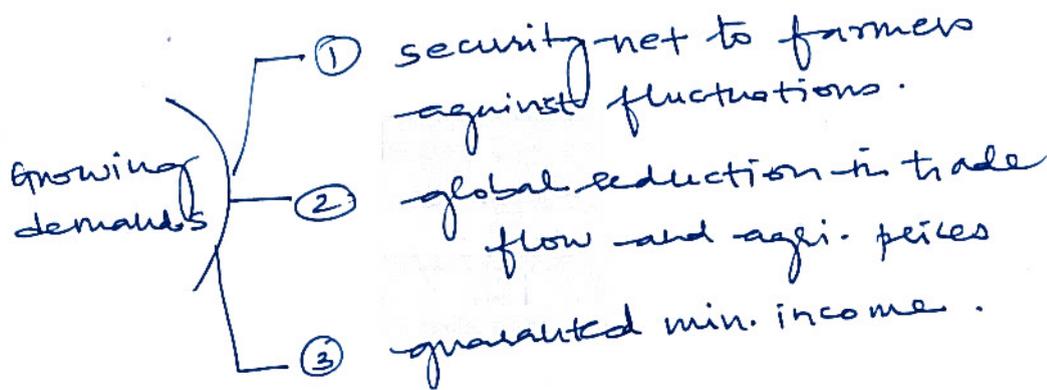


Thus the reforms need to be implemented for structural transformation of Economy with Manufacturing-led - Viksit Bharat

Q7. With the growing demand from farmers for a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Prices (MSPs), critically examine the advantages and challenges of legalising MSP. Also, suggest measures to strengthen price support mechanisms for farmers in India.

(Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

Minimum support price (or) MSP is the direct price intervention tool, where govt. promises guaranteed min. floor price to 22+1 crops, based on recommendations of CACP.



Advantages of legalising MSP.

1. Incentivise farmers to grow diverse crops — (22+1) crops.
2. diverse food basket
→ beyond cereal-centric policy of 'paddy-wheat'
3. minimum price guarantee
→ guaranteed income
→ reduced suicides (6% of total acc. to NCRB)

4. Food security
 → Calorie + nutritional security
 wheat paddy pulses millets.

5. Reducing regional disparities in procurement
 → reduce disparity is development.

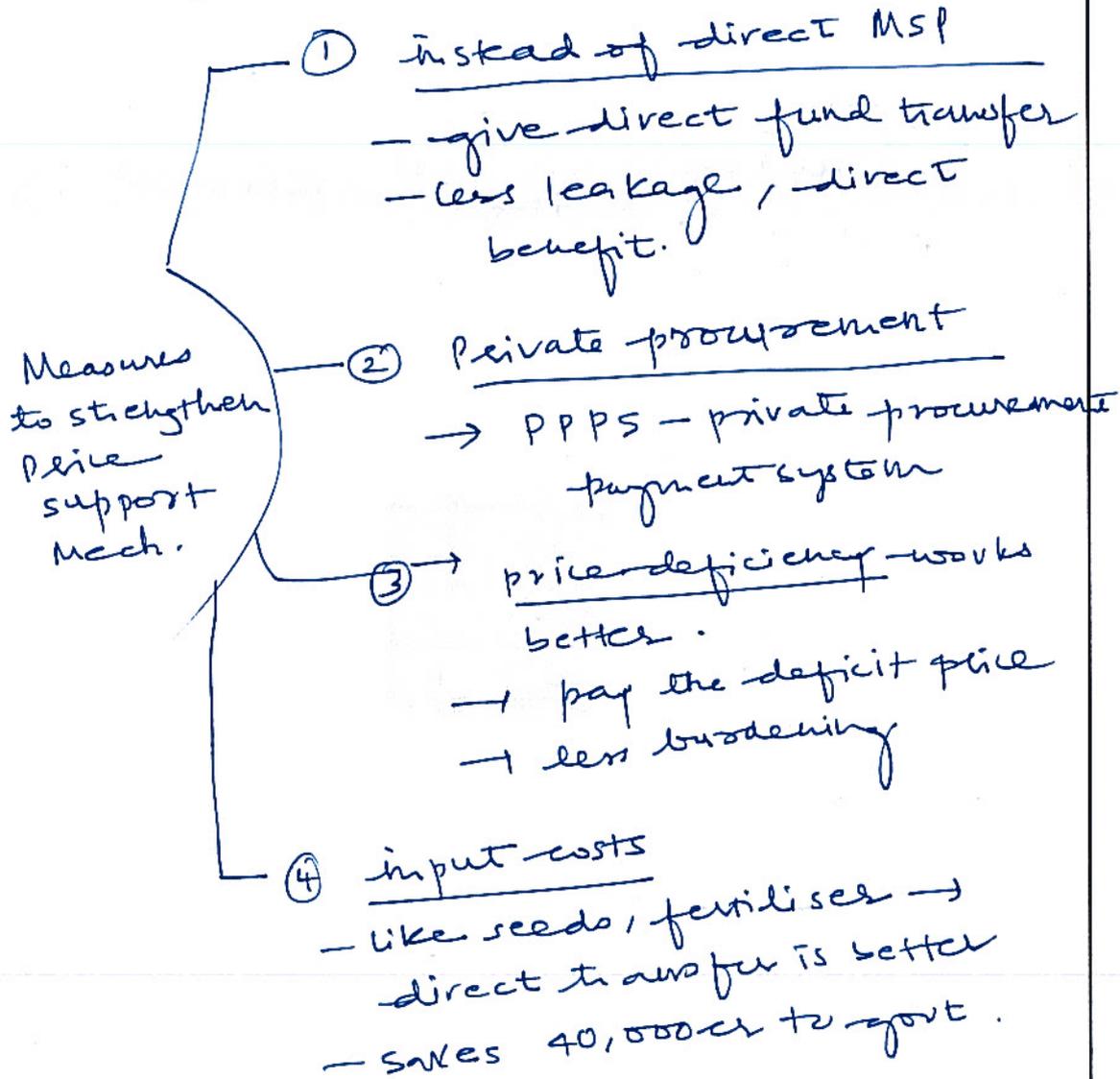
Challenges

1. Burden on the exchequer
 → 7.5 lakh crore - estimate by a study
2. distortion of market
 → will affect the natural forces of price discovery.
3. issues at WTO
 → "de minimis principle" - violated.
4. MSP - currently covers only 28% of the total crop production
 → will help only less than $\frac{1}{3}$ produce
5. may risk food security
 - currently because of MSP, food grain production is 330 MMT
 - diversion to other crops might lead to food insecurity

Candidates must not write on this margin

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :

6. currently, inspite of MSP
 - only 6% of Farmers take advantage of it (w/o AFW)



Legalising MSP is a sensitive topic both politically and economically. Any decision on this should consider the interests of farmers, the impact on domestic and international obligation like food security & WTO esp.

- Q8. What is Climate Resilient Agriculture (CRA)? Discuss the steps taken by the government to promote CRA and examine the key challenges faced in making Indian agriculture climate-resilient.

(Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

The changes in pattern, practices, and products in agriculture, taking into account the effects of ~~agriculture~~ climate-change is called Climate-resilient Agriculture.

According to IPCC AR6, 2023 Report, agricultural productivity will reduce by 10-15% due to climate change effects.

Steps taken

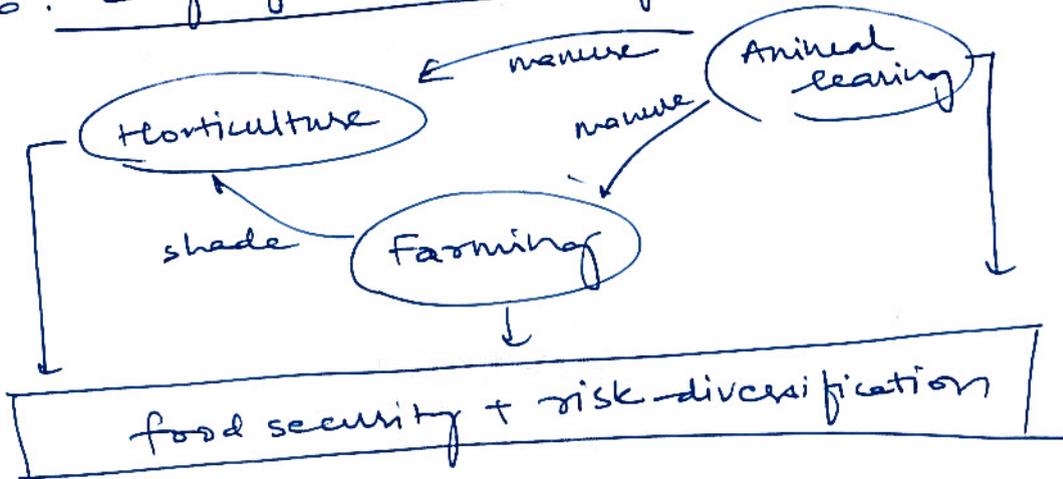
1. NICRA by ICAR
 - pilot project
 - National initiative for climate resilient agri.
2. National Mission for sustainable agriculture (NMSA)
 - use of sustainable inputs.
3. R&D in drought-tolerant varieties
 - (eg) Pulses, Ragi.
4. Precision farming
 - use of technology for input-efficient agriculture

- reduce the inputs that are scarce

5. Soil health card

- 7.75 cr health cards issued
- soil-sensitive agriculture

6. Integrated Farming



7. National Mission for Natural Farming

- incentivising natural farming
- [Bisay Kumar's idea]

8. Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana

- organic farming (sahas Patkar)
- use of natural/organic inputs
- jeevamrut, whapasa, Bijamrit

9. Per-drop - Move crop

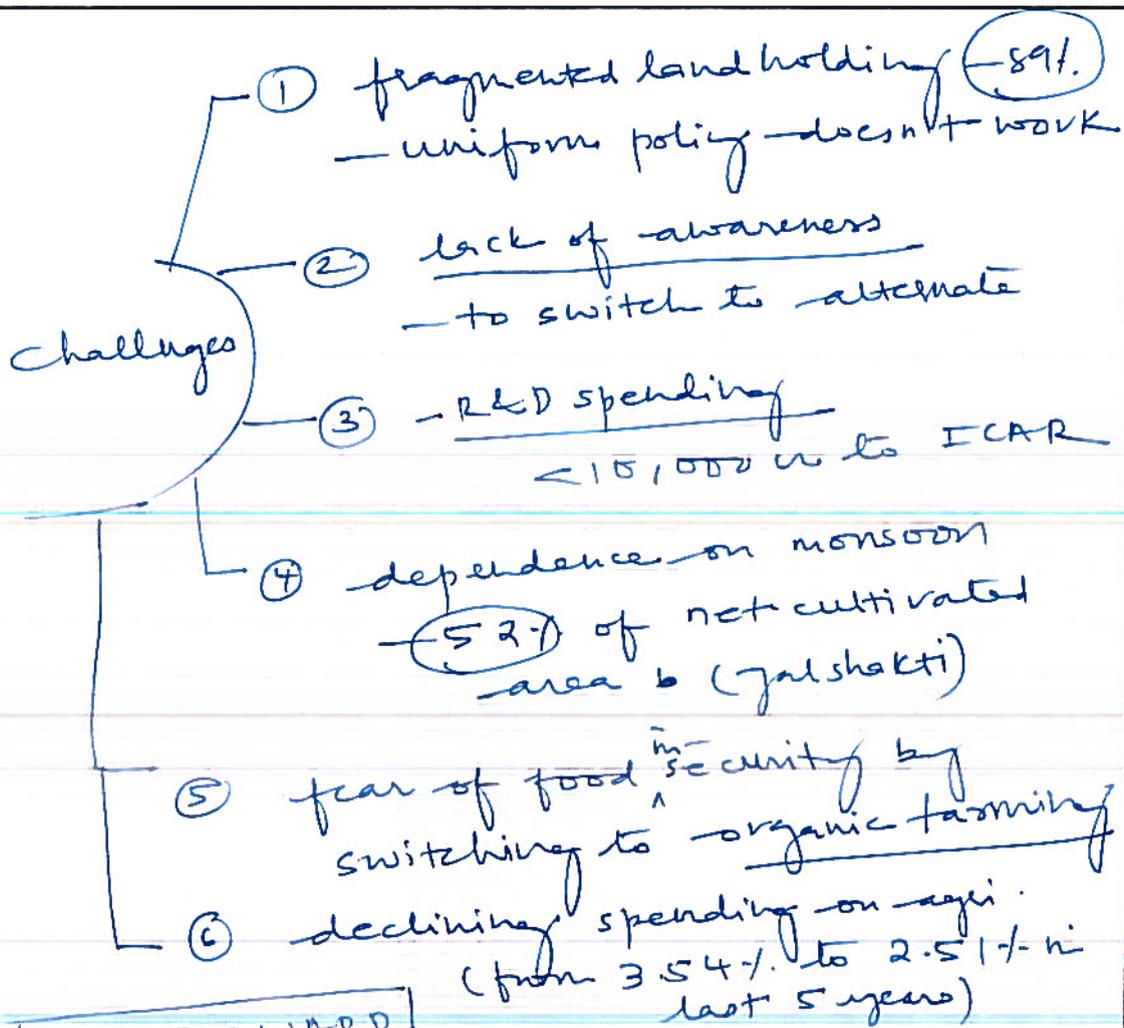
- Krishi Sinchayee Yojana.
- promoting drip irrigation

10. “shade-net-cultivation”

- growing horticulture crops under netting.

Candidates must not write on this margin

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :



WAY FORWARD

1. increase spending on R&D.
— at least 10% of total agri. budget.
2. Extension-services
— need to be proactive and bring awareness. (eg) Madhya Pradesh.
3. increasing insurance coverage
→ better technology led inclusion
→ and reducing the farmer-side premium.

Climate change is real and it risks the food security of a country which is at cusp of growing to top 3rd economy by (2027)

Q9. Discuss the need for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and their potential to transform Indian agriculture. Highlight the challenges faced by FPOs and the initiatives undertaken by the government to promote them. (Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

F.P.Os are collective organisation of farmers, who come together to achieve better prospects economically by leveraging enhanced ~~leveraging~~ bargaining power.

- Need
- ① increase bargaining power
 - ② India: 89% farmers are small and marginal (< 2ha)
 - ③ access to tech, finance, market access.

Potential to Transform Agriculture

1. increase the productivity of Indian agriculture
 - ⊙ Through collective decision-making, based on informed consent →
2. help in corporate farming
 - ⊙ Kays production model

3. overall market access to the produce

→ better agree on quality standards
like SPS (Sanitary & Phytosanitary
Standards) → EU.

4. collectivisation

→ increase gross production

(eg) SATYADRI FARMS - Nashik

5. Access to Technology

→ (eg) custom hiring centres.

→ tech transfer by Corporates

↓
(eg) Pepsico.

b. Access to institutional credit

→ because of bargaining power.

7. Doubling farmers income

→ as highlighted in ASHOK DALWAI Panel.

Challenges

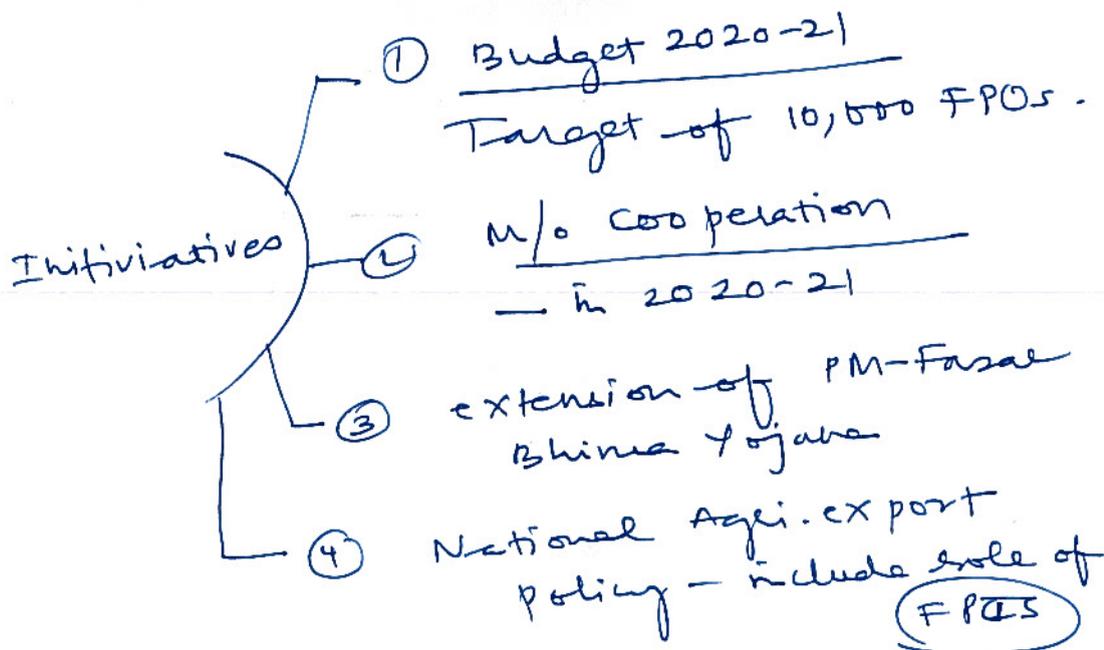
1. According to Dr. Arhok Gulati of ICAR → the target of 10,000 #PI is insufficient

→ he puts forward, need of 1,00,000 FPOs — from current 9000+

Candidates must not write on this margin

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :

2. use of primitive accounting and management system
3. lack of technology adoption
4. regionally skewed
(eg) south and western India.
5. Lack of awareness
— among farmers / cultivators.
6. market fragmentation.
— leading to losses and price escalation
7. politicisation of FPOs — elite control
(eg) Maharashtra



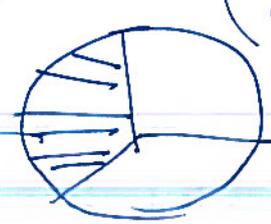
FPOs — work on the collective power of unity. To double the income of farmers, their role assumes greater importance.

Q10 Analyse the opportunities for enhancing agricultural exports from India and the challenges impeding their growth. Also, suggest measures needed for a stable and effective Agri-export policy in India. (Answer in 250 words) 15 marks

According to PIB, India's agriculture exports reached 52.1 billion USD in 2024-25, and share in total merchandise export of agri is 11.1%.

opportunities for enhancing agri. exports.

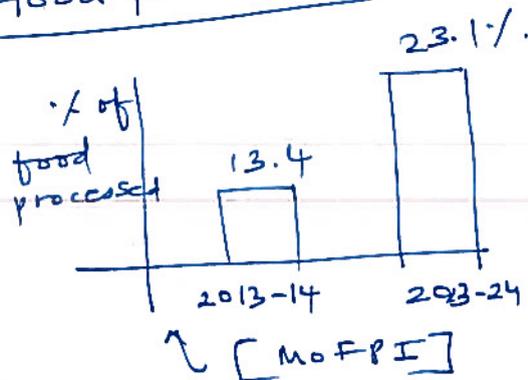
1. of the total 60 MMT of rice trade in the world (M/o commerce) \Rightarrow 20 MMT by INDIA. 33% INDIA.



2. India is the largest producer of Banana, okhra, Mango, Lemon

3. Processing of food products.

\rightarrow sunrise industry



4. Milk production

— India now produces, 230 MMT of milk as against USA's 100 MMT

⊗ AMUL

5. processed meat

→ India has highest livestock population (livestock census) - 2023

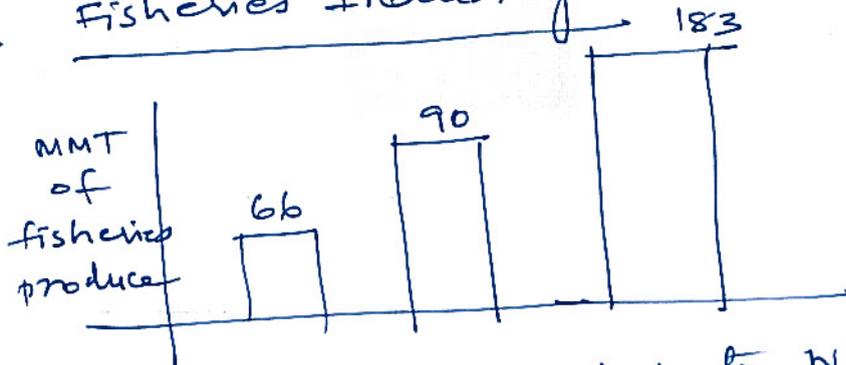
6. FPO formations

→ increase the overall production

7. Shrimp

→ Andhra Pradesh Model - can be simulated - now #1 exported item to USA

8. Fisheries Industry



→ huge export potential to Western countries.

Challenges

1. Non-tariff Barriers

→ SPS, CBAM by EU.

2. lack of traceability

→ needed to enhance the credibility

Candidates must not write on this margin

Intro :
Body :
Conc. :
Total :

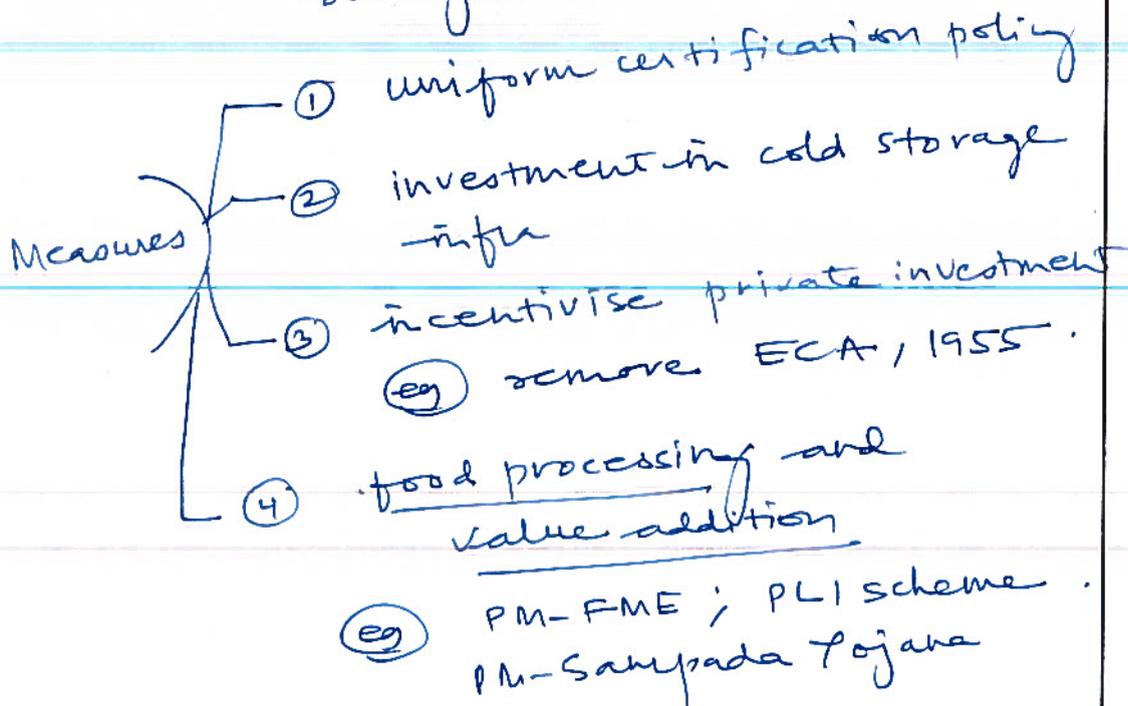
3. fruits-vegetables
 - total part of global trade - just 1%.

4. Need for cold storage
 - 37-40% produce is wasted - NABARD

5. skewed cold storage
 - 4 states have 57% of total facilities.

6. lack of branding and standardisation

7. multiple certification standards
 → IPOP - which recognised by EU
 Participative guarantee scheme - not recognised.



Export-led agriculture is the future. India will ensure food security not just to itself but to the world.

NEXT IAS

Space for Rough Work

NEXT IAS

Space for Rough Work

The page contains a large section of horizontal blue lines, providing space for rough work. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are also a few small black dots scattered on the page, likely due to scanning artifacts.

NEXT IAS

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

CANDIDATES SHOULD READ THE UNDERMENTIONED INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY. VIOLATION OF ANY OF THE INSTRUCTIONS MAY LEAD TO PENALTY.

DONT'S

1. Do not write your name or registration no. anywhere inside this Question-cum-Answer Booklet.
2. Do not write anything other than the actual answers to the questions anywhere inside your QCA Booklet.
3. Do not tear off any pages from your QCA Booklet, if you find any page missing do not fail to notify the supervisor/invigilator.
4. Do not leave behind your QCA Booklet on your table unattended, it should be handed over to the invigilator after conclusion of the exam.

DO'S

1. Read the Instructions on the cover page and strictly follow them.
2. Write your registration number and other particulars, in the space provided on the cover of QCA Booklet.
3. Write legibly and neatly. Do not write in bad/illegible handwritings.
4. For rough notes or calculation, the last two blank pages of this booklet should be used. The rough notes should be crossed through afterwards.
5. If you wish to cancel any work, draw your pen through it or write "Cancelled" across it, otherwise it may be evaluated.
6. Handover your QCA Booklet personally to the invigilator before leaving the examination hall.

SPECIAL REQUEST FOR CANDIDATE AVAILING ONLINE FACILITY

1. Scan the QCA booklet properly. We suggest the uses of the app CAM scanner (Scan QR code in page 2) based on our previous experiences.
2. Please scan the QCA booklet in ample light. Copies scanned under moderate light can hamper evaluation quality.
3. Any page/pdf having shadow needs to be rescanned. Please make sure that the pdf that you upload is as clean as possible.
4. **Candidates not using the QCA booklet** must mention their details on the front page. And leave the next page blank for the macro comments. It must be understood that the answer should start from Page no. 3 in of the scanned pdf.
5. Candidates not using the QCA booklet must follow the sequence of the answer as per the question paper.
6. Please check the sequence of the answer and total number of pages in the scanned version. Make sure it is in consonance with the physical version of the same.