

Q. Discuss the problems associated with rural India and associated solutions. 10 marks

India is a country living in two nations i.e. 'Bharat' and 'India'. Here Bharat represents rural India.

As per census (2011) still 64% of Indian population resides in rural India. Therefore, for the development of rural India the Ministry of Panchayati Raj Institutions (MoPRI), Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and Ministry of Water and Sanitation (MoWS) has been formed.

There has been a lot of problems associated with rural India. They are:

- Social Problems – Untouchability, Social Discrimination, Caste based segregation of houses is present.

This makes implementation of government policies difficult.

Apart from this, absence of Ration Cards, drinking water, electricity and poor connectivity (roads).

- Development Problems - Majority of rural India is devoid of health facilities in the form of health and wellness centres.

Apart from this, primary education is not up to the mark and there are higher dropouts.

There is also the problem of financial inclusion.

- Environmental Problems – Rural India is impacted by the problem of unsustainable agriculture. There is high use of insecticides and pesticides and during rainfall all these chemicals leach into ground water, local water bodies, rivers, etc. which results into high rates of cancer, eutrophication of ponds, death of water bodies.

Overexploitation of ground water results in fluoride, arsenic and radioactive contamination.

Even burning of biomass results into irritation in the eyes and other respiratory issues.

- Poverty and Unemployment – Rural India is facing the problem of social insecurity as:

(i) Minimum wages are not available to the people.

(ii) Employment opportunities are not well distributed.

(iii) There is no provision of pension and provident funds.

(iv) Even women do not feel empowered as they do household work along with agricultural work without remuneration.

Daily Answer Writing

- Political Problems –

- (i) The panchayats are not working efficiently.
- (ii) Gram Sabha does not meet regularly and on fixed dates.
- (iii) People's participation in decision making is not up to the mark.

- Other issues –

- (i) Lack of connectivity, both digital and physical.
- (ii) Lack of transportation facilities.
- (iii) High rate of criminal activities and absence of law and order.

Some other solutions recommended by NITI Aayog and Finance Commission are:

1. Revival of Panchayati Raj institutions by State Governments

- (i) State governments can regularly conduct elections of panchayats.
- (ii) They can also empower them to collect their own taxes.

2. Efficient implementation of Government of India schemes such as 'Saubhagya', Ujjwala, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna, Jal Jeevan Mission, etc.

3. Successful implementation of National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) through Self Help Groups (SHGs).

4. Ayushman Bharat Abhiyaan also has provision of opening up of health care centres which will provide employment and wages to ASHA workers and Anganwadi workers.

The path towards \$5 trillion economy is moving from rural India and agriculture. Therefore, the government's thrust is also moving towards rural development with the help of NITI Aayog.