

GS Daily Answer Writing**Week 1 Day 5 - Model Structures**

1. “Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms in India. Hence, the caste system cannot be eradicated in India.” Comment. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Model Structure**Introduction**

- Caste refers to a broad hierarchical institutional arrangement along which basic social factors like birth, marriage, food-sharing etc are arranged in a hierarchy of rank and status.

Main Body

New identities and associational forms assumed by caste system in India:

- Political patronage: Most of India’s political class run on the basis of caste system. People seldom vote on the basis of rationality except in urban areas. Its ability to gain political support has kept the caste system relevant. Eg. Bahujan Samaj Party. Political mobilization based on caste has been rising.
- Social taboo: In rural India, which comprises the majority, society functions on a caste system. Person diverging from the path of caste rules is boycotted leading to fear in people.
- Social benefits: Reservation has indeed been helpful in uplifting socially backward people but it has reinstated the importance of the caste system. People flaunt their caste identity in order to avail benefits under government. Eg. Dominant castes like Marathas, kapus and patidars have been demanding reservation.
- Continuity of caste endogamy in institutional form. Eg. caste based matrimonial sites

Measures to remove caste system

- Egalitarianism- Egalitarianism is a novel concept where there is no class. This approach will create a society where each and every person will be equal on social, economical and political front. This will avoid use of caste identity.

- Education- Education can be considered a long term solution wherein the newer generation will be educated against the perils of caste system. Instilling such ideas can prevent our future generations from practicing the caste system.
- Reduced influence of caste in different arenas of life
 - Eg. Marriage - increasing number of inter-caste marriages
- Breaking of caste-occupation linkage
- Reduced incidents of untouchability and commensality

Conclusion:

- Thus, it's too early to predict that the caste system is inevitable. Instead new methods and ideas have to be initiated that can create an equal society, which is non dependent on caste identity.
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2. What are the challenges faced by a country in midst of demographic transition, suggest remedial measures to overcome the same? (Answer in 250 words) 15

Introduction:

- India in the **third phase** of demographic transition have fertility rates that have declined significantly from previously high levels but have not reached the population-stabilizing “replacement level” of 2.1 children per woman

Main body:

- The window began in 2018 when the working age population began to grow larger than its dependent population – children aged 14 years or below and people above 65 years of age. It is expected to last for 37 years until 2055.
- (The demographic dividend is smaller, but will last longer due to regional variation in the onset of fertility decline. As southern states struggle with the growing burden of supporting the elderly, northern states will supply the workforce needed for growth, as per National Family Health Survey-5)

The challenges posed by it:

- **Unemployment levels** in India had hit a 45-year high. As of 2017-18, only half of the people in the working age were actually working. In 2004-05, the same proportion was 63.7 per cent.
- Poor **education and skills development** is evident from the Pratham surveys that are released each year. In 2018, it showed that just half of the children in the 5th standard could read a text from the 2nd standard.
- **State of India’s Environment report** released by the Center for Science and Environment finds that an astounding 375 million children may suffer long-lasting impacts due to the pandemic including being underweight and stunted, which will lead to losses in education and economic productivity.
- The possibility of India falling into a ‘**middle-income trap**’ is higher than the chances of reaping a demographic dividend.

(Countries fall in it because they easily escape abject poverty in early stages of development through simple mobilisation of labour and capital. But once these gains are

made, a different level of institutional quality is required. As the economy matures, the need for complex contracts, smooth enforcement, and effective regulation are needed.)

- **The growing proportion of the elderly:** As fertility declines the challenge of supporting an ageing population with a shrinking workforce. This challenge is greater for states ahead like Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- **Allocating financial resources:** Much of the Centre-state revenue sharing occurs through recommendations of various Finance Commissions. The Fifteenth Finance commission added criteria of demographic performance to reward states with lower TFR. progressive states suffer more losses.
- **political representation:** The Indian constitution mandates allocation of Lok Sabha seats across states in proportion to their population via the Delimitation. But a much greater population per constituency in northern states than in southern states. In 2011, Uttar Pradesh had an average of 25 lakh persons per constituency, while Tamil Nadu had 18.5 lakh.

Way forward:

- Countries like Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea have already shown us how demographic dividend can be reaped to achieve incredible economic growth by adopting **forward-looking policies** and programmes to empower the youth in terms of their education, skills and health choices.
- **Health spending** has not kept pace with India's economic growth. The public spending on health has remained flat at around 1% of GDP. Evidence suggests that better health facilitates improved economic production.
- Make reproductive healthcare services accessible on a **rights-based approach**.
- India needs to increase female workforce participation in the economy.
- New federal approach to governance reforms for demographic dividend will need to be put in place for policy coordination between States on various emerging population issues such as migration, aging, skilling, **female workforce participation** and urbanisation
- **Inter-ministerial coordination** for strategic planning, investment, monitoring and course correction should be an important feature of this governance arrangement.

Conclusion:

- It is time to convert this dividend to opportunity – Data and demographic dividend combined with India's proven tech prowess presents a massive opportunity for the country, that this decade will be '**India's techade**'."