

### Gen Z and the dynamics of democratic engagement

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1  
Current events of national and international importance

**Mains:** General Studies - 1

- Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.
- Effects of globalization on Indian society.

#### 1. Background

- Democracies worldwide are witnessing **backsliding**, with counter-narratives failing to arrest authoritarian drift.
- In this context, **Gen Z (born 1997-2012)** has emerged as a **renewed source of democratic hope**.
- **Bangladesh (2024)** and **Nepal (2025)** saw Gen Z-led regime-challenging protests focused on corruption, transparency, and institutional accountability.
- These proved more effective than earlier mass protests such as **Occupy Wall Street (US, 2011)**, the **Arab Spring (early 2010s)**, and the **Brazilian Spring (2013)**.
- These earlier movements **gained wide visibility but failed to achieve sustained** policy reforms or regime change.

#### 2. Gen Z's Political Subjectivity

- Gen Z challenges the idea of political apathy by expressing dissent in **non-traditional but organised ways**.
- Its democratic engagement is shaped more by **everyday experiences, moral choices, and emotions** than by formal institutions.
- It combines **strong individualism with social detachment**, and shows **less prejudice and weak ideological alignment**.
- It believes that **personal experiences are political**, but avoids moralising or identity-based politics.

- It prefers **living its values over leading movements**, which limits long-term collective mobilisation

#### 3. Changing Forms of Protest

- Gen Z protests are **episodic, leaderless, and non-ideological**, driven by **virtual engagement** rather than street mobilisation.
- This contrasts with the **farmers' movement (2020-24)**, which was **organised, leader-driven, and sustained**.
- Gen Z shows confidence along with **anxiety**, driven by **greater social openness** and **declining economic opportunities**.
- Openness to therapy and counselling shows higher awareness of mental health issues.
- As a result, Gen Z's democratic participation is **fragmented but can have strong short-term impact**.

#### 4. Impacts

- Gen Z identity is strongly shaped by **consumption, markets, and technology**.
- Access to **technology, education, and information** weakens **caste and religious identities**, making Gen Z **more secular**.
- Consumption symbols like the latest iPhone are seen as **social equalisers**, often **hiding real class inequality**.
- Rapid technological change can also promote **hyper-nationalism**, focused on future aspirations..
- Gen Z often **rejects radical change as outdated**, but shows confidence in its culture and identity.
- Gen Z's **democratic engagement is unpredictable**- it may disappoint expectations but can still create new political possibilities.

## Bhasha' matters in India's multilingual moment

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1  
Economic and Social Development-Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.

**Mains:** General Studies - 2  
Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

### 1. India's Linguistic Diversity: A National Strength

- India has **1,300+ mother tongues** and **121 constitutionally recognised languages** (Census 2011).
- Language loss means losing **cultural knowledge, identity, and generational wisdom**.
- Protecting languages is not only a **cultural issue**, but also an **educational and developmental imperative**.
- **Mother-Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE)** strengthens learning and identity.

### 2. Why Mother Tongue Matters in Education

- **International Mother Language Day (February 21)** highlights the theme **"Youth voices on multilingual education."**
- **UNESCO** supports education in the language children best understand.
- The 2025 **State of the Education Report for India - "Bhasha Matters"**, published by UNESCO highlights:
  - ➔ MTB-MLE is **educationally effective and brings meaningful change**.
  - ➔ It gives **10 policy suggestions** to help India build a more **inclusive and fair education system** that sees **language diversity as a strength**.
  - ➔ It highlights successful practices such as **bilingual textbooks, trained teachers, and digital tools** that provide **multilingual learning resources** to schools and communities.

### 3. The Language Barrier in India

- Globally, **250+ million learners** lack education in a familiar language.

- In India, **44% of children** begin schooling in a language different from their home language (NCERT, 2022).
- Consequences include:
  - ➔ Weak **foundational literacy and numeracy**
  - ➔ Learning gaps
  - ➔ Reduced **confidence**
  - ➔ Higher **dropout risk**

### 4. Policy Measures and the Way Forward

- **National Education Policy (NEP)** and **National Curriculum Frameworks (2022-23)** prioritise **mother tongue in early education**.
- Successful examples:
  - ➔ **Odisha** - Multilingual education in **21 tribal languages**.
  - ➔ **Telangana** - Use of **Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA)** multilingual digital resources.
- National digital initiatives:
  - ➔ **PM eVIDYA**
  - ➔ **Adi Vaani**
  - ➔ **BHASHINI (BHash-based ANd Intelligent Node for Inclusion in India)**
  - ➔ **AI4Bharat language technologies**

#### Key Recommendations:

- Clear **state-level language-in-education policies grounded in MTB-MLE**
- Better **teacher training for multilingual classrooms**
- High-quality **multilingual materials and assessments**
- Community participation & inclusion of **indigenous knowledge**
- Create a **National Mission for Mother-Tongue-Based Multilingual Education**.
  - ➔ To coordinate efforts across ministries and institutions and expand successful pilot projects into nationwide reform.

## Treatise for federalism: On Tamil Nadu and the Kurian Joseph report

**Prelims:** General Studies Paper - 1  
Current events of national and international importance

**Mains:** General Studies - 2  
Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein.

### 1.Context

- The Tamil Nadu government **formed a High-Level Committee on Union-State Relations, led by Justice Kurian Joseph**, to study increasing centralisation of power in India.
- It **examined Constituent Assembly debates, academic research, past Centre-State commission reports**, and recent governance trends.

### 2. Key findings: Weakening of Federalism

- The weakening of Indian federalism threatens democracy and national progress.**
- The Constitution originally **gave more power to the Centre due to Partition and integration of princely States.**
- Over time, **laws and policies have further increased the Centre's power** over States.
- The Committee **calls for a major "structural reset" of federalism**, similar to the 1991 economic reforms.

### 3. Key Concerns

- The **reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories** shows the Centre's control over States.
- The push for **one national language may harm linguistic diversity.**
- Governors are seen as tools of interference** by the Centre in State matters.
- Delimitation of Lok Sabha seats may **reduce representation** of some States.
- Sectors like **education and health** are becoming **more centralised.**
- The **GST system has reduced** States' financial autonomy.

### 4.Conclusion

- The **report calls for urgent corrective measures.**
- It urges a **national debate** to restore federal balance.
- Strong and cooperative federalism** is essential for democracy, diversity, and long-term progress.

### KEYWORDS

#### SWAYAM

- SWAYAM** is a programme launched by the **Government of India** to promote the three core principles of education policy- **access, equity, and quality.**
- Its main objective is to deliver the **best teaching-learning resources** to everyone, especially the **most disadvantaged sections.**
- It also aims to **bridge the digital divide** by connecting learners to the **knowledge economy.**
- It is an online platform that hosts courses from **Class 9 to post-graduation**, allowing learners to study **anytime, anywhere, and free of cost.**
- The courses are **interactive**, developed by **leading teachers**, and include **text modules, video lectures, assessments, and self-learning resources.**
- Institutions such as **National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)** and **NCERT** offer a wide range of **school-level online courses** through the SWAYAM platform.

#### SANKALP Scheme

- SANKALP (Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) was **launched in 2018.**
- It is implemented by the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).**
- The programme is a **World Bank loan-assisted project.**

- It aims to improve and strengthen India's overall skill development system at both Central and State levels.
- It promotes innovation, better quality training, and greater access to skill development, especially for women and disadvantaged groups.

#### Pax Silica

- Pax Silica is a multilateral initiative launched by the United States in December 2025.
- It aims to secure supply chains of critical technologies like semiconductors, artificial intelligence (AI), and rare earth elements (REEs).
- The word "Pax" means peace, and "Silica" refers to silicon used in semiconductor technologies.
- Recently, India officially joined the US-led coalition
- Other Signatories of Pax Silica: Australia, Republic of Korea, Greece, Singapore, Israel, UAE, Japan, United Kingdom, and Qatar.
- Non-signatory participants: Canada, Taiwan, Netherlands, the European Union, and OECD.

#### Aditya-L1 Mission



- Aditya-L1 is India's first space-based solar observatory, launched by Indian Space Research Organisation on 2 September 2023 using PSLV-C57.
- It is placed in a halo orbit around the Sun-Earth Lagrange Point L1, about 1.5 million km from Earth, and was successfully inserted on 6 January 2024.

- The L1 location allows continuous, eclipse-free observation of the Sun, enabling real-time monitoring of solar activity and space weather.
- The mission carries seven payloads: four remote-sensing instruments to study the Sun and three in-situ instruments to study particles, plasma, and magnetic fields.
- It observes the photosphere, chromosphere, and corona and studies coronal heating, solar flares, coronal mass ejections (CMEs), and solar wind.
- Recent observations from Aditya-L1 helped explain unusual dawn-time geomagnetic disturbances during intense solar storms in May and October 2024.
- These findings improved understanding of the impact of solar storms on satellites, navigation systems, and other technologies.

#### Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP)

- Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) was launched on 15 February 2023 for the comprehensive development of villages along the northern border.
- VVP-I covers 662 villages in 46 blocks across 19 districts of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and Ladakh.
- It promotes livelihoods through tourism, skills, agriculture, and allied activities, supports basic infrastructure and connectivity,
- It aims to prevent out-migration from border villages.
- Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II) was approved on 2 April 2025 as a Central Sector Scheme with an outlay of ₹6,839 crore till 2028-29.
- It covers villages along international land borders (excluding the northern border) in 17 States/UTs, including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and others.
- VVP-II aims to ensure secure, prosperous borders, curb trans-border crime, and integrate

border populations as **“eyes and ears” of border-guarding forces.**

- The programme seeks saturation of villages in **four themes:**
  - ➔ Road connectivity, telecom, television connectivity, and electrification.

