



ASTRA – Answer Writing Skills Training Programme

Sample Mains synopsis

1. How does 'PURA 2.0' help in the economic development of rural India? Discuss.

Key terms

1. Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Area 2.0.
2. Economic development of rural India.

Question's demand/Focus:

Approach

Introduction:

- Begin with the brief explanation of "what is 'PURA 2.0'? what it does? Who implements it? Write about its focus and goals. OR
- Can also provide the context preceding PURA 2.0.

Body:

1. Provide brief information about the objectives/features of PURA 2.0.
2. Why PURA 2.0 is crucial for the development of rural areas?
3. Discuss about, how 'PURA 2.0' help in the economic development of rural India through several key initiatives like
 - Infrastructure Development,
 - Education and Skill Development,
 - Healthcare Access, Employment Opportunities,
 - Market Access and Sustainability and Innovation.

Conclusion:

Emphasize the importance of PURA 2.0 and the need of it in the economic development of rural India.

Context:

The Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) scheme was initially introduced by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam in 2003 to address the rural-urban divide by providing urban-like amenities and livelihood opportunities in rapidly urbanizing rural areas.

The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) implemented the PURA scheme on a pilot basis in seven clusters for a period of three years (2004- 05 to 2006-07).

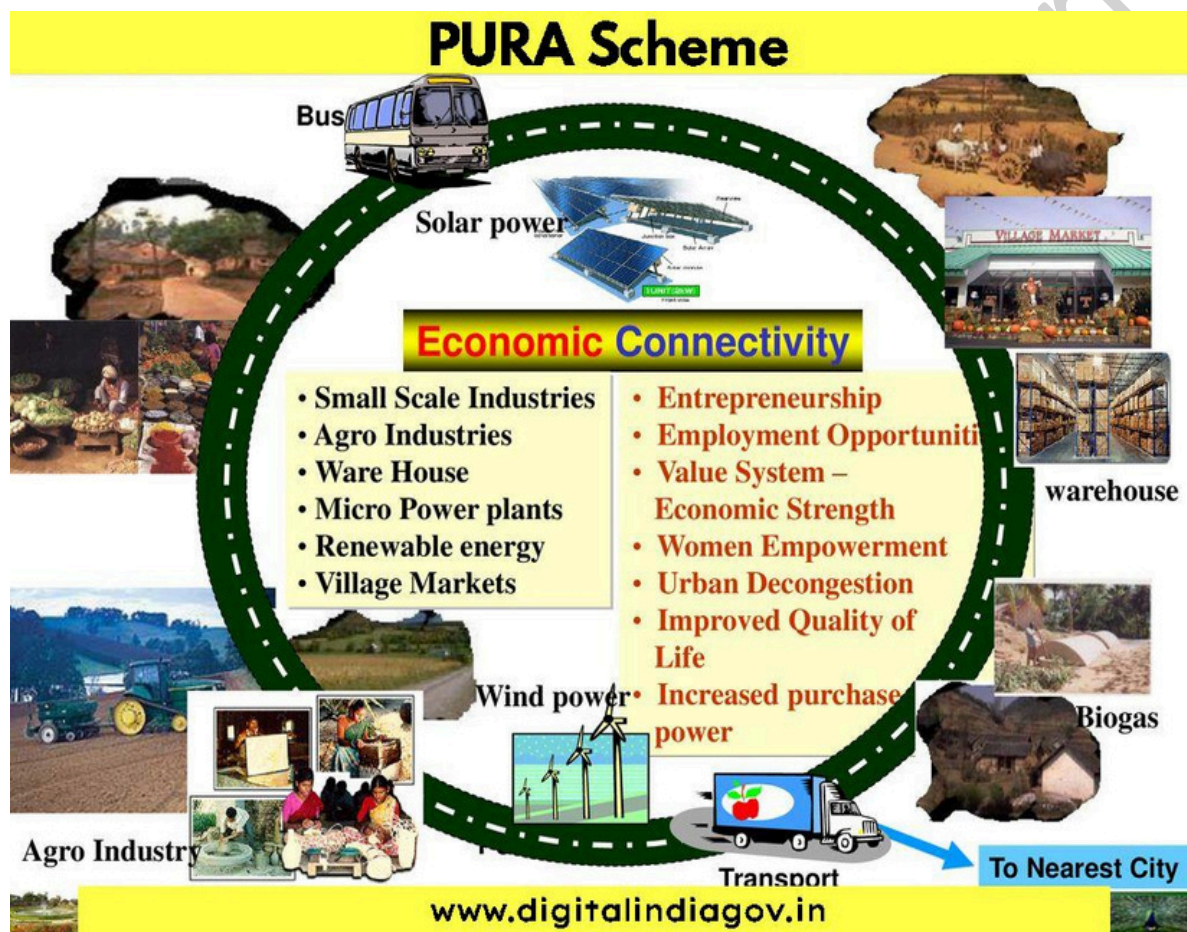
It is implemented through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) between Gram Panchayats and the private sector making the potential growth centres as census towns.

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Introduction:

PURA 2.0 is an evolved version of this concept, launched in 2012 as a central-sector scheme aiming to further enhance the economic development of rural India through integrated infrastructure development and local empowerment. This helps improve the quality of life and economic opportunities for rural residents.

Amenities and economic activities under PURA include Water and Sewerage, Construction and maintenance of Village streets, Drainage, Solid Waste Management, Skill Development, village street lighting, telecom, electricity generation, village linked tourism, etc.



PURA 2.0 is crucial for the economic development of rural India due to several reasons:

Importance

1. **Balanced Development:** Helps bridge the urban-rural divide by providing similar amenities, reducing migration to cities.
2. **Empowerment:** Empowers rural communities through better access to education, healthcare, and technology.
3. **Sustainability:** Encourages sustainable practices, ensuring long-term environmental and economic health.
4. **Inclusivity:** Focuses on inclusive growth by integrating marginalized communities into the economic mainstream.

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- Innovation: Fosters innovation by introducing modern technologies and practices tailored to rural needs.

Need

- **Rural Population:** With a significant portion of India's population living in rural areas, improving their economic conditions is vital for overall national progress.
- **Agricultural Backbone:** Enhancing rural infrastructure supports agriculture, which is a key economic sector in India.
- **Reducing Poverty:** Provides opportunities for income generation, helping reduce poverty levels.
- **Local Employment:** Creates job opportunities locally, reducing dependency on urban jobs and supporting local economies.
- **Market Access:** Improves access to markets, allowing rural producers to get fair prices and expand their reach.

How does 'PURA 2.0' help in the economic development of rural India?

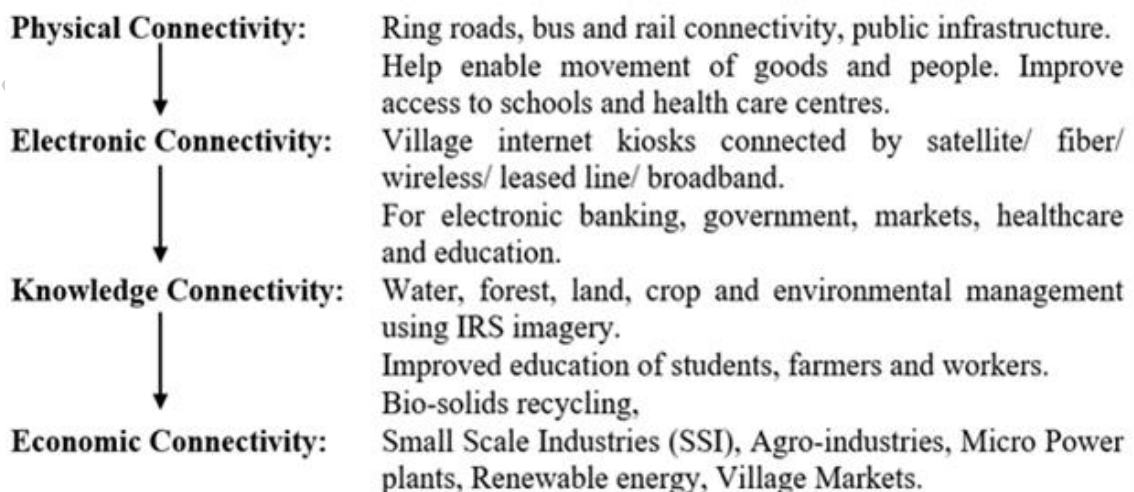
"PURA 2.0" aims to boost economic development in rural India by integrating essential services and infrastructure. Some of the key initiatives under PURA 2.0 are:

1. Infrastructure Development

a. Improved Connectivity

- **PURA 2.0 and Transportation:** Focuses on the development of rural infrastructure, including roads and transportation networks, to improve connectivity between villages and urban centers. This facilitates easier access to markets, education, and healthcare.
- **Example:** In states like Maharashtra and Karnataka, PURA 2.0 projects have led to the construction of better roads and transport facilities, enhancing the movement of goods and people, and contributing to local economic growth.

PURA concentrates on the 4 main types of connectivity for rural areas:



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b. Energy and Water Supply

- **Electricity and Water:** The scheme focuses on providing reliable electricity and clean water supply to rural areas. This not only improves the quality of life but also supports agricultural activities and small-scale industries.
- Example: In Andhra Pradesh, PURA 2.0 initiatives have helped in establishing solar-powered water pumps and grid connections, which have significantly increased agricultural productivity and ensured reliable water supply.

2. Economic Opportunities and Livelihoods

a. Skill Development and Employment

- **TPURA 2.0** promotes skill development programs to enhance the employability of rural youth. Training in various trades and entrepreneurship helps in creating job opportunities and supporting local businesses.
- Example: In Tamil Nadu, PURA 2.0 has facilitated skill development centers that offer training in various skills like tailoring, IT, and agro-based activities, leading to increased employment opportunities and self-employment.

b. Promotion of Local Enterprises

- **Support for SMEs:** By providing infrastructure and providing financial support, PURA 2.0 encourages the establishment and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas. This boosts local economies and creates employment.
- Example: In Punjab, PURA 2.0 has supported agro-processing units and rural crafts, enhanced local production and marketing, and lead to higher incomes for rural entrepreneurs.

3. Social and Educational Development

a. Access to Education and Health Services

- **Educational Institutions:** The scheme supports the establishment of schools and vocational training centers in rural areas, ensuring better educational opportunities for rural children and youth.
- **Health Services:** Improved infrastructure also includes better health facilities, which contribute to enhanced healthcare services in rural areas.
- Example: In Odisha, PURA 2.0 has contributed to the construction of primary schools and healthcare centers, improving educational and health outcomes in rural communities.

b. Empowerment of Rural Communities

- **PURA 2.0** emphasizes community participation in planning and implementation. This ensures that projects are tailored to local needs and fosters a sense of ownership among residents.

- Example: In Bihar, local panchayats have been actively involved in the implementation of PURA 2.0 projects, leading to more effective and responsive development initiatives.

4. Integration of Technology and Innovation

a. Use of Modern Technology

- **Digital Infrastructure:** PURA 2.0 integrates technology to enhance governance and service delivery in rural areas. This includes the use of digital platforms for accessing government services, e-commerce, and agricultural advice.
- Example: In Karnataka, digital kiosks have been set up in rural areas under PURA 2.0, providing access to various government services, online education, and market information.

b. Innovation in Rural Development

- **Innovative Solutions:** PURA 2.0 encourages innovative solutions to address rural challenges, such as low-cost construction materials, efficient irrigation systems, and renewable energy sources.
- Example: PURA 2.0 has supported the development of rainwater harvesting systems and bio-digesters in rural areas of Rajasthan, improving water management and sustainable energy use.

5. Challenges and Future Prospects

a. Implementation Issues

- **Coordination and Monitoring:** Effective implementation of PURA 2.0 requires strong coordination between various stakeholders and rigorous monitoring to ensure that projects meet their objectives.
- **Sustainability:** Ensuring the long-term sustainability of PURA 2.0 projects is crucial for their continued impact on rural development.

b. Scaling Up

- **Broader Reach:** Expanding the reach of PURA 2.0 to more regions and integrating it with other rural development schemes can enhance its effectiveness and benefits.

Conclusion

PURA 2.0 plays a crucial role in the economic development of rural India by improving infrastructure, creating economic opportunities, and enhancing social services. Through integrated development and community participation, it aims to bridge the urban-rural divide and foster sustainable rural growth. Addressing implementation challenges and scaling up efforts will be key to realizing the full potential of PURA 2.0 and ensuring its long-term success in transforming rural India.

2. Describe the role of the NITI Aayog in contemporary Economic Planning in India.
How does it differ from the earlier Planning Commission?

Answer:

Key terms

1. NITI Aayog
2. Contemporary Economic Planning
3. Difference from the PC

Question's demand/Focus:

1. Role of the NITI Aayog in contemporary economic planning in India.
2. What is the difference between NITI and PC? Must be analysed using various parameters.

Approach

Introduction:

- Begin with the brief explanation about the NITI Aayog. write its objectives and functions. OR
- Provide conditions that facilitated the formation of NITI Aayog.

Body:

1. Discuss the role of the NITI Aayog in contemporary economic planning of India through the functions like
 - Strategic Policy Formulation,
 - Cooperative Federalism,
 - Research and Innovation,
 - Monitoring and Evaluation,
 - Advisory Role,
 - Resource Optimization,
 - Reform Implementation and Sustainable Development.
2. Difference between NITI Aayog and erstwhile Planning Commission.

Conclusion:

Emphasize the importance of NITI Aayog through its key initiatives which aims to drive India's economic transformation, focusing on inclusivity, sustainability, and innovation.

Introduction:

NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) is the apex public policy think tank of the Government of India was established on January 1, 2015, to replace the Planning Commission. It was designed to foster a more flexible, decentralized approach to economic governance and policy-making.

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The main objectives of NITI Aayog are to foster cooperative federalism, catalyze economic development, and involve state governments in the economic policy-making process using a bottom-up approach.

Key functions and contributions:

- a. Policy Formulation: Developing strategic and long-term policies and programs.
 - b. Coordination: Fostering cooperative federalism through structured support and
 - c. mechanisms.
 - d. Innovation: Encouraging research and innovation in various sectors.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: Tracking progress and evaluating the impact of policies.

NITI Aayog also works on initiatives like digital transformation, sustainable development, and improving healthcare and education.

NITI Aayog plays a significant role in contemporary economic planning in India through the following functions:

1. Formulating Strategic Policies for Economic Growth:

- NITI Aayog is central to the formulation of strategic and long-term policies aimed at addressing national development strategy, formulating frameworks for social sectors like healthcare, education, poverty alleviation and others like Infrastructure, Investment etc ensuring the sustainable economic growth.
- For Example:
 - a. National Energy Policy (NEP) 2017, which outlines India's long-term energy vision. The NEP emphasizes diversification of energy sources, increased energy efficiency, and a shift towards renewable energy. This policy aligns with India's commitment to the Paris Agreement and its target of achieving 50% of its energy needs from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
 - b. National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Aims to position India as a global leader in AI technology. This strategy outlines key areas for research, innovation, and investment, ensuring that India harnesses AI for economic growth and social welfare.

2. Enhancing Cooperative Federalism:

- A core function of NITI Aayog is to promote cooperative federalism by facilitating dialogue and cooperation between central and state governments.
- Provides technical assistance and policy guidance tailored to state-specific needs.

Examples:

- ~~The State Energy & Climate Index~~ The State Energy & Climate Index ranks states on their energy performance and climate action. This index not only provides valuable insights into state-level energy policies but also fosters a spirit of competition and encourages states to adopt best practices in energy management and climate resilience thereby enhancing Co-operative federalism.
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index, evaluates the performance of states in achieving SDGs. The index provides states with a benchmark and fosters

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competitive spirit among them, encouraging best practices and policy reforms that align with national priorities.

3. Driving Innovation and Entrepreneurship:

NITI Aayog is actively involved in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship through various initiatives.

- Encouragement of R&D: Supports innovation through initiatives like the Atal Innovation Mission.
- Data-Driven Insights: Uses analytics and technology to gather data, providing actionable insights for policy-making.

Examples:

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) aims to create a culture of innovation in India. Through this mission, the Aayog has established Atal in various institutions, fostering creativity and entrepreneurship. The Atal Innovation Centers (AICs) initiative has led to the incubation of several successful startups, such as Agastya, which focuses on providing educational solutions through innovative technologies.

4. Policy Advisory and Implementation:

- NITI Aayog provides critical policy advisory services to the government, helping in the formulation and implementation of key policies.

Example:

- NITI Aayog's Policy Action Plan for Agri-Tech sector through technological innovations. This plan advises on integrating technology such as drones and blockchain in agriculture to improve productivity and market access for farmers.
- National Strategy for Financial Literacy is a recent initiative aimed at enhancing financial literacy across the country. This strategy seeks to educate citizens about financial planning, investment options, and risk management, thereby promoting financial inclusion and stability.

5. Monitoring and Evaluating Development Programs:

- The Aayog plays a significant role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of various government programs.

Example:

- The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) housing, is regularly assessed by NITI Aayog to ensure its effective implementation. The Aayog's evaluations have helped streamline processes, address bottlenecks, and improve the overall delivery of housing projects across the country.

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- The Poshan Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission) is one such program where the Aayog has been actively involved in tracking progress and assessing the impact on malnutrition rates.

6. Encouraging Private Sector Participation:

- NITI Aayog actively promotes private sector participation in public sector projects.
- The National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), launched in 2019, is a significant initiative that outlines an ambitious investment plan of over ₹100 lakh crore in infrastructure projects across sectors like transport, energy, and urban development. The NIP aims to attract private investments and enhance public-private partnerships to boost infrastructure development.

7. Addressing Regional Disparities:

- To address regional disparities and promote inclusive development, NITI Aayog has launched several initiatives.
- Example: The Aspirational Districts Programme, initiated in 2018, targets districts that lag in key socio-economic indicators. This program focuses on improving health, education, and infrastructure in these districts through targeted interventions. Districts like Chandauli in Uttar Pradesh and Jhalawar in Rajasthan have seen significant improvements in educational outcomes and healthcare facilities as a result of this program.

8. Promoting Sustainable Development: NITI Aayog also emphasizes sustainable development through initiatives like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index.

- It Advocates for green technology and sustainable practices across sectors.
- The SDG index assesses the performance of states and union territories in achieving the SDGs set by the United Nations.
- The index helps identify gaps in development and provides a framework for policy interventions aimed at improving sustainability, bringing agricultural reforms, improve agri- productivity and the quality of human life.

II: Difference between NITI Aayog and Planning Commission

NITI AAYOG VS PLANNING COMMISSION

Parameters	NITI Aayog	Planning Commission
Function	NITI Aayog has not been given the mandate or powers to impose policies on States. NITI Aayog is basically a think-tank or an advisory body .	The Planning Commission had the power to impose policies on States and for the projects approved by the Planning Commission.
Allocation of Funds	The powers for allocation of funds have not been given to the NITI Aayog. The powers are with the Finance Ministry .	The Planning Commission had the power to allocate funds to the State Governments and various Central Government Ministries for various programmes and projects at National and State Levels.
Role of State Governments	In NITI Aayog, State Governments have to play a more proactive role .	State Governments did not have much role to play apart from taking part in the meetings. The State Government's role was confined to the National Development Council .
Governing Council	The Governing Council of NITI Aayog has Lieutenant Governors of Union Territories and State Chief Ministers .	The National Development Council had Lieutenant Governors and State Chief Ministers . Planning Commission had to report to the National Development Commission .
Constitutional Backing	NITI Aayog is an Executive Body as it is not mentioned in the Constitution of India, and it was not established by an Act of Parliament.	The now-defunct Planning Commission was also an Executive Body.

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Aspect	Planning Commission	NITI Aayog
Establishment	Established in 1950 by a Resolution of the Government of India.	Established in January 2015 through a Cabinet resolution.
Objective	To formulate and implement Five-Year Plans for economic development.	To foster cooperative federalism and strategic policy planning.
Structure	Headed by the Prime Minister, with a Deputy Chairman and seven members.	Headed by the Prime Minister, with a
Focus	Centralized planning with a top-down approach focusing on state-level participation. Formulated detailed Five-Year Plans with federalism.	
Planning Methodology	Focuses on strategic vision and long-term policy frameworks without detailed planning targets.	
Role in Economic Planning	Developed and monitored Five-Year Plans providing a platform for state-level government collaboration.	Provides policy advisory, strategic
Implementation	Resists in responsibility for implementation and moves state-level areas but does not emphasize on state-level participation. Emphasizes public-private sectors like infrastructure.	
Approach to Federalism	actively involving states in planning and decision-making processes. Initiatives include the Atal Innovation National	
Key Initiatives	Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) and Aspirational Districts Programme. Monitors and evaluates specific agriculture, industry, and	Mission (AIM), programs and schemes, such as the
Monitoring and Evaluation	and provided annual reports.	Poshan Abhiyan and the National Health Mission.
Public Participation	Limited scope for public and state participation. Replaced in 2015 to move towards a more flexible and decentralized planning model.	Encourages public and state-level participation through dialogue and collaborative mechanisms.
Evolution		Represents a shift towards a dynamic, decentralized model of economic planning and policy development.

Conclusion:

In contemporary economic planning, NITI Aayog plays a crucial role in shaping India's development landscape through strategic policy formulation, promotion of cooperative federalism, support for innovation and entrepreneurship, and rigorous monitoring of government programs. By addressing regional disparities and fostering private sector participation, NITI Aayog contributes significantly to India's economic growth and sustainable development. Its dynamic approach reflects the evolving needs of the country and positions it effectively for future challenges.

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