

1. What is the relevance of land reforms in contemporary agricultural development in India? What are the major bottlenecks in the implementation of these reforms?

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

- (1) Enlist the important land reforms which were not implemented like Tenancy, Ceiling and Consolidation of land holdings.
- (2) Tenancy reforms important for giving rights to the tenants eg. West Bengal & Kerala cases
- (3) Ceiling important for equitable land distribution. Not implemented in most of India except in J&K. Also justified as smaller size farms have been proved to lead to better productivity than very large ones
- (4) Consolidation important for bringing scattered land of very small size.
- (5) Can mention modern land reforms like digitization of land records, land acquisition as well.
- (6) Can take a critical approach to impact of land acquisition on agriculture.

(107 words)

2. What are the major reforms needed in Food Corporation of India to ensure food security goal for India? Do the recommendations of the Shanta Kumar Committee take us in that direction?

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

- (1) FCI largely procures grain from already developed states like Punjab & Haryana. Need to be changed. Decentralized procurement will encourage both production and storage capability of the states. e.g. Chattisgarh, MP etc.
- (2) Storage infrastructure needs to be improved. Better godowns. Better technology to store grains, better practices to reduce wastage from rains etc.
- (3) Leakages in food grains distribution to be reduced as most leakages in PDS takes place in initial stages.

Shanta Kumar Committee justified in many areas.

- (1) It favours restricting FCI procurement role in backward states like Bihar, Assam, Eastern UP etc. which are also potential 2nd Green Revolution states. decentralized procurement for others
- (2) Talks at length about improvement in Storage infrastructure (see report highlights)
- (3) Also, talks about reforming FCI's administrative structure to improve its efficiency.

But the committee largely believes that PDS is inefficient due to leakages and should be replaced by cash transfers. Debatable issue. Any view point can be taken.

(160 words)

3. In the light of debate over poverty measurement in India, how do you think is it relevant for poverty removal policies?

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

- (1) Poverty is a subjective concept. May not just be associated with lack of income but also lack of access to basic necessities like food, education and health services.
- (2) UN includes many more factors like access to water, sanitation, electricity etc. in poverty measurement.
- (3) Measurement important to know where the country is primarily lacking.
- (4) Poverty line a limited but simpler concept to measure poverty. So, it is important to update poverty line for increased number of food and non-food items.
- (5) Discuss Tendulkar Committee recommendations. Benefits & Problems
- (6) Also, how Rangarajan Committee differs from the former.
- (7) Future strategy that India can take on lines of MPI.

(111 words)

4. What are some important changes incorporated in GDP measurement in India? Do you think these changes will make GDP a better welfare measure?

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

The following are the major changes incorporated in the just-concluded base-year revision:

- (i) Headline growth rate will now be measured by GDP at constant market prices compared to growth rate in GDP at factor cost at constant prices earlier
- (ii) Sector-wise estimates of gross value added (GVA) will now be given at basic prices instead of factor cost. The relationship between GVA at factor cost, GVA, at basic prices, and GDP (at market prices) is given below:

GVA at basic prices = CE + OS/MI + CFC + production taxes less production subsidies

GVA at factor cost = GVA at basic prices - production taxes less production subsidies

GDP = \sum GVA at basic prices + product taxes - product subsidies

(where CE: compensation of employees; OS: operating surplus; MI: mixed income; and, CFC: consumption of fixed capital).

- (iii) Base year for GDP calculation has been revised from 2004-05 to 2011-12.

Although the government claims that new GDP figures use improved data, some concerns remain. For example, GDP at market prices will be more impacted only by higher indirect taxes, while only higher indirect taxes can negatively impact the consumption expenditure which reflects lower level of welfare.

(197 words)

5. Discuss the important changes brought in by the Finance Commission in determining tax transfers to the States. Do you think these changes are justified?

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

Some important changes brought in by the fourteenth finance commission (FFC):

- (i) The FFC has increased the share of the states in the central divisible pool from the current 32 percent to 42 per cent.
- (ii) The FFC has proposed a new horizontal formula for the distribution of the states' share in divisible pool among the states. Relative to the Thirteenth Finance Commission, the FFC has incorporated two new variables: 2011 population and forest cover; and excluded the fiscal discipline variable.
- (iii) Other types of transfers have been proposed including grants to rural and urban local bodies, a performance grant along with grants for disaster relief and revenue deficit.

While these changes have made states better off and is claimed to be a move towards fiscal federalism, some concerns remain, particularly after the Budget 2015-16 and following steps. For instance, following the budget, the central government has introduced a number of cess and surcharges for enhancing their own revenue to the detriment of the states. e.g. 5-12% of surcharge on domestic companies, 2% Swachh Bharat Cess on all services, increase in clean energy cess. Further, certain taxes have been shifted from states to centre e.g. conversion of excise duty on petrol and diesel in to road cess to centre, abolition of wealth tax and 2% surcharge on income tax in lieu of this. When these losses to states are accounted for, it will dilute the actual benefits that has been claimed FFC.

(243 words)

6. 'Macroeconomic stability is unimaginable without a healthy banking sector.' Do you agree? What do you think are some immediate reforms needed in the present Indian banking sector?

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

This statement is justified as banking sector is associated with multiple roles in economy. It is provider of credit to the companies and households so that growth can be sustained both through higher investment and consumption. Banks play crucial role in government securities market also to ensure that government can continue to play developmental role. Banks role in capital markets as institutional investors and underwriters is also important. In this background health of banking sector is crucial, for instance through maintenance of lower levels of NPAs, following the BASEL norms etc.

Some of the immediate banking sector reforms needed are:

- (i) Reduce NPAs by steps like restructuring the NPAs through joint lenders' forum or the corporate debt restructuring (CDR) mechanisms and ensure strong appraisal of the borrowers in future.
- (ii) Complete shift towards BASEL III norms through
- (iii) Encouraging non-governmental organisations engaged in micro-finance activities. Banks are being encouraged to adopt the agency model by using the infrastructure of civil society organisations, rural kiosks and village knowledge centres for providing credit support to farm or rural sector generally.
- (iv) Stepping up Priority Sector Lending, particularly to the agricultural sector.

(189 words)

7. 'The presence of Participatory Notes in the Indian share market is more a reflection of corrective policy measures related to foreign investment needed from government and SEBI rather than just the goal of money laundering.' Comment with appropriate arguments.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

P notes are issued to the hedge funds by the FIIIs as the hedge funds are willing to invest in the Indian capital markets but without getting registered with SEBI. It is argued that it might cause money laundering as hedge funds can bring in black money in the Indian economy through FIIIs.

While there is some truth in the above argument, it is not completely correct because interest of such investors in the Indian capital market itself reflects global interest in Indian assets.

It has been argued that PNs create volatility because these investors are looking for maximum profit which results not only from the nature of market but its taxation and regulatory regime as well. The SIT on black money wants to know the ultimate beneficiary of a PN transaction. This is difficult because PNs are a reflection of a net position between all buyers and sellers, it's impossible to pinpoint the ultimate beneficiary owner. Also, the regulator has the ability to trace the ownership chain only after an investigation starts.

Taking another viewpoint, if a person in India buys a derivative in India and sells it to an investor in London, India does not have the right to ask about the London investor except in the context of an investigation. If we want better knowledge about the beneficiary owner, we would do well to reform tax policy, capital controls and financial regulation to bring the business directly to India. This would be more effective in strengthening regulatory control, without destroying much-needed global flows into India.

(258 words)

8. 'The power sector reforms hold key to the achievement of energy security goal.' Comment and critically analyse the most important power sector reforms chalked out by the government.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

The statement is well justified as power sector is crucial for all sectors of the economy ranging from agriculture to the services. Through the clearance of supply-side bottlenecks, power generation is one front on which the government has indeed done well. The assurance of coal linkages in particular has brought life back to power generation units that were idle without fuel. Moreover, additional facilities have been added to the nation's total power capacity over the last one year.

There are a few states which are trying to solve multiple problems related to the sector. Goa, Uttarakhand and Meghalaya have joined hands with centre to ensure

- (i) an increase in power generation from local energy sources
- (ii) an improvement in the inter-state transmission network, a revival of the sick distribution sector, enhancement of the use of renewable energy and
- (iii) the use of energy-efficient measures.

Among the other initiatives suggested was a strong communication, information technology and monitoring division. The Centre will provide assistance in terms of central financial assistance from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy for various schemes and the power ministry's support under various schemes for rural and urban electrification.

However, the same degree of attention has not been directed towards distribution channels. A paradoxical situation where state electricity boards (SEBs) lack the means to buy power from power generation units, leading to surplus power in the hands of power generators and a record low PLF, sums up the poor state of power distribution. One solution is to encourage more production by allowing the companies to charge market determined price, but critiques argue that these are intended to help private monopolies.

(274 words)

9. 'Sustainable water use is a crucial input in attaining sustainable economic development.' Elaborate the statement highlighting the role of water in sustainable industrial and agricultural development.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

For sustainable use, we must know the present situation on water use. Out of total water use, irrigation accounted for nearly 78% followed by domestic use 6%, industries 5%, power development 3%, and other activities claimed about 8% including evaporation losses, environment and navigational requirements. Therefore, for sustainable agricultural and industrial the following reforms must be taken:

- (i) Irrigation Sector Reforms

State Governments may restructure the Water Resources Departments to bridge the knowledge gap in planning, development and management of water resources in a sustainable manner as

also making it more professional. The water rates being charged at present are very low and are not able to meet even the operation and maintenance costs of the irrigation projects. Farmers on the other hand, who otherwise may not be averse to paying increased water charges refuse to do so unless the quality of services is first improved and there sets a vicious circle. Micro Irrigation system should be encouraged.

(ii) Domestic use of water can be made more efficient by taking steps like metering, market-determined tariff and by public awareness about more efficient water use in everyday activities.

(iii) Industrial Sector

Unlike in Irrigation the industries require water on regular basis throughout the year. Therefore, to ensure reasonable availability of water for industries even during the lean periods, the industries will have to inculcate the habit of efficient water use. Besides this, industrial water management has to address a major issue of water quality of effluents which can also be tackled to some extent through efficient water use.

(257 words)

10. 'The occupational structure of India has witnessed a shift from agricultural to the services sector bypassing the industrial sector.' Discuss the reasons behind this phenomenon and whether it is necessarily a negative feature of the Indian economy?

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

Such a situation can be explained through a number of factors. Industrialization process in India could not be successful due to the failure of the Mahalanobis strategy in 1960s. Thus, as expected the agricultural labour-force could not migrate to industries in large numbers. Industrial labour force need some minimum skill set as well and therefore the shift needs an active training programmes by the government and the industries. it was largely missing in India.

In this background the excess agricultural workforce had to shift for low quality employment like in construction activities and traditional services making Indian occupational structure significantly different. The strict labour laws also discouraged industries to create more employment opportunities.

Some argue that this feature simply reflects the strength of the Indian services sector and therefore not a negative feature. But, the problem is that this labour force is not employed in productive services but in low skill sector which is also associated with lower wages.

Further, without industrial development, services growth cannot be continued and thus, such occupational structure should change.

(175 words)

11. 'Minimum Support Price (MSP) Policy in India has mainly favoured the producers rather than abiding to all the principles of an ideal Agricultural Pricing Policy.' Do you agree? Give arguments to support your answer.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

Yes, this is largely true for India. An ideal MSP policy should take care of both the producers and consumers in order to fulfil the food security goal. But, in India it has focused more on producers, particularly since 1980s by offering higher MSP for Wheat and then Rice, under political pressure from the large farmer lobbies.

MSP has often been much higher than both paid-out and imputed costs put together which not only increase food subsidy, but also fuels higher price in the market. It has increased wastage of grains due to lack of storage facilities.

Also, pricing policy intervention by government should have been more beneficial to the poor farmers which has not happened in India as most of such benefits have gone to already developed states like Punjab and Haryana.

Pricing policy plays more important role during a surplus when market prices may fall affecting the farmers but in India, higher MSPs are announced well before the cropping season.

Although critiques say that this is also because we have largely reduced input subsidy that was given earlier. Less input subsidy loss can only be balanced out by higher MSP.

(192 words)

12. What are the important reasons behind the circulation of Black Money in the Indian Economy? What steps can immediately be taken to check its further circulation?

(12^{1/2} marks 200 words)

Answer:

A Triad exists between the corrupt businessmen, corrupt politicians and the corrupt executive. The Triad is mutually convenient to all. The businessmen are able to influence policy and protect their ill gotten profits. The other two in the Triad need the businessman to invest their funds and launder them. Most politicians have at least one businessman close to them who provides such services. The media is increasingly a party to some of these illegalities.

The reduction in tax rates and removal of controls like MRTP, FERA, licensing and easing of reservations for small scale after 1991 has not led to a reduction of the size of the black economy. It is because the Triad has grown stronger and forms of making black incomes have changed.

To tackle the black economy, the Triad has to be dismantled. It functions in secrecy. Hence the most important step is the 'Right to Information'. This would make the politician and the executive accountable and their functioning transparent so that unlike at present, they cannot subvert the law deliberately. The present dispensation on Right to Information is entirely inadequate since it is far too complex for the common man to use. The mindset of the politicians and the bureaucracy needs to change. Unfortunately, those heading the Right to Information bureaucracy have mostly been bureaucrats.

A major reform required is that political parties function democratically. Electoral reform is required so that genuine representatives of the people enter the legislature. Reform of Judiciary

is required. Cases have to be speeded up and procedures simplified. Direct taxes need to be simplified by elimination of concessions and deductions.

(269 words)

13. “India’s Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) is balanced and comprehensive for the coming COP-21 Paris climate conference.” – Comment.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

INDC include reduction in the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33 to 35 per cent by 2030 from 2005 level and to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.

INDC outlines the post-2020 climate actions they intend to take under a new international agreement. Despite facing enormous development challenges like poverty eradication, ensuring housing, electricity and food security for all, India declared a voluntary goal of reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by 20–25%, over 2005 levels by 2020, despite having no binding mitigation obligations as per the Convention.

Urban transport policy will encourage moving people rather than vehicles with a major focus on Mass Rapid Transit Systems. Delhi Metro, which has become India’s first MRTS project to earn carbon credits, has the potential to reduce about 0.57 million tonnes of CO₂ e annually. The switch from Bharat Stage IV (BS IV) to Bharat Stage V (BS V) and Bharat Stage VI (BS VI) to improve fuel standards across the country is also planned for the near future.

India’s share of non-fossil fuel in the total installed capacity is projected to change from 30% in 2015 to about 40 % by 2030. To accelerate development and deployment of renewable energy in the country, the Government is taking a number of initiatives like up-scaling of targets for renewable energy capacity addition from 30GW by 2016-17 to 175 GW by 2021-22.

(247 words)

14. “Once treated as an outsider by the global non proliferation and export control bodies including the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG), the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group, India has travelled a long way to now becoming a stronger partner of the same community.” – Discuss.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

The efforts began right after its nuclear tests in 1998, when India expressed its support for the basic objectives of the NPT—marking a complete turnaround from the approach it had previously demonstrated. The United States, one of the founding designers of the existing global non-proliferation architecture, realized that while India would not join the NPT, it could play a crucial role in strengthening other non-proliferation and export control bodies.

This understanding resulted in the first phase of India's acceptance into global non-proliferation architecture, channelled via the waiver from the NSG's full-scope safeguards requirement in 2008 and a special safeguards agreement signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for India's civilian nuclear facilities, allowing India to engage in global nuclear commerce.

India's entry in the four export control bodies, including the NSG, the Wassenaar Arrangement, and the Australia Group, is the next phase of India's integration into the global non-proliferation community and New Delhi's application for membership to the MTCR is the first step of this phase. India's entry into the regime will benefit both India and the MTCR. Membership in the regime will allow India to better contribute to the global non-proliferation cause. It will also enhance the level of understanding between MTCR members and India, allowing the latter to import dual-use technologies and items for peaceful purposes. On the other hand, by including India, MTCR members will ensure that all supplies of sensitive missile and related technologies that India exports will adhere to MTCR guidelines and that the same rules will apply to New Delhi as they do to other MTCR suppliers.

(267 words)

15. What is graphene? Discuss its properties and mention at least three of its applications.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

Graphene is a single layer of carbon packed in a hexagonal (honeycomb) lattice, with a carbon-carbon distance of 0.142 nm.

Properties of graphene

Density of graphene

The unit hexagonal cell of graphene contains two carbon atoms and has an area of 0.052 nm². We can thus calculate its density as being 0.77 mg/m². A hypothetical hammock measuring 1m² made from graphene would thus weigh 0.77 mg.

Optical transparency of graphene

Graphene is almost transparent, it absorbs only 2.3% of the light intensity, independent of the wavelength in the optical domain. Thus graphene is more than 100 times stronger than the strongest steel.

Electrical conductivity of graphene

This is somewhat higher than the conductivity of copper which is 0.60x10⁶ Ω⁻¹cm⁻¹.

Thermal conductivity

Thus graphene conducts heat 10 times better than copper

Applications:

Graphene has a number of properties which makes it interesting for several different applications. It is an ultimately thin, mechanically very strong, transparent and flexible conductor. Its conductivity can be modified over a large range either by chemical doping or by

an electric field. The mobility of graphene is very high³⁰ which makes the material very interesting for electronic high frequency applications. Recently it has become possible to fabricate large sheets of graphene. Using near-industrial methods, sheets with a width of 70 cm have been produced. Since graphene is a transparent conductor it can be used in applications such as touch screens, light panels and solar cells, where it can replace the rather fragile and expensive Indium-Tin-Oxide (ITO). Flexible electronics and gas sensors are other potential applications.

(258 words)

16. ISRO has pioneered in space technology for providing solutions to some of the prime concerns of the nation such as poverty, illiteracy, food and energy security etc and improving the quality of life in terms of better health, education and infrastructure.” – Discuss.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

Our satellite based networks are today playing a key role in taking education, health care and rural connectivity to the remotest parts of our country. Disaster Management in India on account of widely varying geo-climatic conditions, has always been vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and cyclones. ISRO's Earth Observation, Meteorological and Communication satellites are a core component of the disaster management scenario of the country. Meteorological satellites are used extensively to monitor weather events and forecast weather, including the genesis of cyclones, their track and landfall prediction. This helps minimize damage to life and property. The value added products generated using satellite imagery help address information needs of all phases of disaster management such as preparedness, early warning, response, relief, rehabilitation, recovery and mitigation.

Millions of fishermen living along the 7500 kms long shoreline in India are dependent on fishing for their livelihood. As fish stocks dwindle and move further offshore, search time, cost and effort increase for fishermen. Satellite based fishing zone advisories are made available in local languages on a daily basis to the fishing community resulting in enhanced fish catches, reduced search times and resultant savings in fuel costs, thereby improving the well-being and quality of our fishermen. Space applications have been suitably adapted to respond to the needs of integrated watershed development in the country, conservation of soil and water resources, and protection of the environment.

(233 words)

17. Keeping in mind the recent security concerns, discuss the need for effectively managing the India-Nepal border.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

- The seeds for an ‘open’ border between India and Nepal can be found in the Treaty of Peace and Friendship which the two countries signed in 1950.
- Keeping this in consideration, India has granted Nepal 15 transit and 22 trading points along the border. Numerous madrasas which have proliferated in the Terai region on both sides of the Indo-Nepal border during the past two decades have also become a source of major concern for the Indian security establishment as it is suspected that some of them might be providing shelter to fugitives and becoming a platform for recruiting cadres for terrorist organisations.
- The problem is further aggravated by intelligence inputs that Pakistani ISI has been using Nepalese territory to carry out anti-India activities since the 1990s. Documents have revealed that the ISI has created a number of terrorist fronts in Nepal and has also pushed in men and explosives through the border to carry out terror attacks in India.
- Encroachments in the no-man’s land by removing or damaging border pillars could be used as a hideout as well as for storing arms and explosives.
- The SSB has been granted the powers to search, arrest and seizure under the Criminal Procedure Code as well as powers to arrest under the Passport Act.
- The SSB is also installing surveillance cameras along the border. For addressing the twin objectives of security and trade facilitation, two integrated check posts with state of the art detection and screening devices as well as support facilities are being constructed at Raxual and Jogbani.
- The agencies have also prepared and enforced a Cross-Border Crime Control Action Plan 2013 to curb trans-border crimes.

(281 words)

- 18.** Discuss India’s position and stand on Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). Discuss measures taken by India in the fields of bio – safety and bio – security.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

- BTWC came into force in 1975. Its purpose, as mentioned in the preamble of the Convention, was “to exclude completely the possibility of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins being used as weapons.”
- India is for a verification mechanism. It has a good record of implementing its obligations under the BTWC. India’s stated position is that it supports the further strengthening of the BTWC verification, its universalisation, CBMs, export controls and international cooperation consistent with the objectives of the BWC. In particular, India is in favour of the fullest implementation of Article X of the convention.
- In recent years, India has taken several concrete measures in the area of bio-safety and security. It has formulated national guidelines to deal with various kinds of bio-disasters including epidemics, pandemics and bio-terrorism.

- It has fostered international cooperation and consulted the World Health Organisation and Food and Agricultural Organization. India has suggested the enhancement of international capabilities to respond, investigate and mitigate alleged bio-attacks.
- It has strengthened its national legislation by enacting a WMD Act, which brings in line its export control efforts with international standards.
- Given its record and its efforts to promote bio-security and bio-safety, India should adopt a proactive role in strengthening the BTWC further. It should throw its weight behind greater transparency, implementation of Article X and continuation of the inter-sessional mechanism of the meeting of experts.
- India should at the same time ensure that the interests of its burgeoning bio-industry are not compromised. India has already indicated its desire to join the Australia Group, which demonstrates its seriousness in pursuing export controls to curb proliferation.

(272 words)

19. “Replacing the Assam Rifles with the BSF along the Indo-Myanmar border will be a suboptimal option to ensure security in the Northeast region.” – Discuss.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

- The Assam Rifles is administratively under the MHA but operational control over it is exercised by the army (MOD).
- The MHA is under the impression that the Assam Rifles, traditionally a CI force, has not proved to be efficient in this task while at the same time it is not guarding the border properly as well. According to media reports, the MHA has observed that the AR has not been able to check the trans-border movement of the Northeast militants from their bases in Myanmar.
- The MHA argues that relieving the Assam Rifles from border duty would allow it to focus on CI operations. Further, the MHA has sought the implementation of the “one border, one force” doctrine of 2001.
- On the other hand, the MOD has opposed the proposal for moving the Assam Rifles from the border on the grounds that the force and the army would be deprived of its knowledge of the area and the operational experience it has gained in the region especially considering the potential threat from China.
- Against the backdrop of this emerging security environment and further considering the vulnerability of the border areas, the MOD is justified in wanting to keep the Assam Rifles under the control of the army along the Indo-Myanmar border.
- The Assam Rifles also supplements the army’s combat capability since it is integrated with the latter’s overall operational role and profile.

- Given that the Assam Rifles has been deployed in the Northeast since its inception, no other forces in India is more experienced or has a better understanding of the ground scenario.

(270 words)

20. “Aberrations of the ceasefire by Pakistan on Line of Control have been experienced very frequently in the recent times.” Examine the reasons for the violations of the ceasefire and suggest remedial measures to curb it.

(12^{1/2} marks, 200 words)

Answer:

- Ceasefire on the borders has been one of the most tangible and effective military confidence building measures between India and Pakistan. Therefore, for Pakistan to disturb the tranquility along the LoC by initiating firing defies logic. There can be many reasons for these ceasefire violations.
- Firstly, it could be the handiwork of terrorists coming from rear areas, surreptitiously sneaking in between the Pakistani positions and firing across the LoC. But this view is hardly credible given the control exercised by the Army and the ISI on terrorist organisations.
- Secondly, it is plausible that fundamentalist elements within the Pakistan Army who are against the India-Pakistan peace process may be indulging in such acts, either directly or by involving terrorists. Despite various centrifugal forces and domestic pressures, the Pakistan Army still remains a professional and cohesive force. Therefore, the likelihood of this possibility is also low.
- The third and more likely reason could be that ceasefire violations are part of a well thought out and planned strategy of the Pakistani establishment. To deflect pressure and resist any demands for an increase in force levels to undertake concerted counter terrorist operations in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and along the border with Afghanistan, Pakistan could be raising the bogey of deterioration in the situation and threat on its eastern border. However, it would not be in Pakistan’s interest to create any major incident on the border with India at this stage.
- Confidence building measures by virtue of their very nature depend on continued functioning of communication channels between the two countries, restraint, transparency and verification of agreed measures.

(270 words)