Society & Social Justice · GS - II

“Demographic Dividend in India will remain only theoretical unless our manpower becomes more educated, aware, skilled and creative.” What measures have been taken by the government to enhance the capacity of our population to be more productive and employable?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2016	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
12.5	~200 words

Answer Hint

Demographic dividend; education; skill development; vocational training; digital literacy; entrepreneurship; employability; human capital

Model Answer

Introduction

India's demographic dividend arises from its relatively large working-age population. However, it can generate economic growth only when people possess the education, skills, health and adaptability required by a changing labour market.

Government Measures

1. Education and Foundational Learning

- The Right to Education framework supports elementary education.
- Samagra Shiksha integrates school education support across levels.
- The National Education Policy, 2020 emphasises foundational literacy, flexibility and vocational exposure.

2. Skill Development

- The Skill India initiative promotes vocational training and industry-relevant skills.
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana supports skill training and certification.
- Industrial Training Institutes and apprenticeship programmes provide practical and technical training.

3. Employment and Entrepreneurship

- Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana facilitates loans for eligible small businesses.
- Startup India promotes entrepreneurship and innovation.
- MGNREGA provides a rural employment safety net, while other employment and livelihood programmes support different groups.

4. Digital and Technical Capabilities

Digital India promotes digital access and public digital infrastructure. Technology and innovation initiatives can expand access to learning, markets and employment opportunities.

5. Health and Nutrition

Public health, nutrition and sanitation programmes contribute to a healthier workforce and improve learning capacity.

Challenges and Way Forward

Skill mismatch, uneven education quality, limited formal employment and gender disparities remain obstacles. Stronger industry-academia collaboration, apprenticeships, career guidance, digital literacy and support for women's workforce participation are essential.

Conclusion

India's demographic dividend is an opportunity, not an automatic outcome. Investments in quality education, health, skills and productive employment are necessary to convert its working-age population into a capable and competitive workforce.