HOW INDIA HAS MADE ATTEMPTS TO IMPLEMENT THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Abstract-- **India is one of the poorest countries in the world. Despite these efforts, access to clean water and sanitation remains a significant challenge in India, particularly in rural areas. Several initiatives and programs are in place to improve access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for those who live in poverty. Among these initiatives, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a key initiative to improve the quality of education in India. The SSA aims to provide free healthcare coverage to more than 500 million families in the country.**

One of the key initiatives is the 'National Rural Drinking Water Program' (NRDWP), launched in 2009 to provide safe drinking water to rural populations. Moreover, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), also known as Ayushman Bharat, provides free healthcare to over 500 million households. Nevertheless, despite some progress, women and girls in India still face significant challenges regarding access to health care, education, and health outcomes.

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, taken up by all UN Members in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace, prosperity and overall human satisfaction for people and the planet for today and the future. Its soul comprises 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This was an urgent call for movement by all industrialized and developing countries to enter into an international partnership. They acknowledged that ending poverty and other destitutions must go along with systems that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling environmental change and working to maintain our oceans and forests.
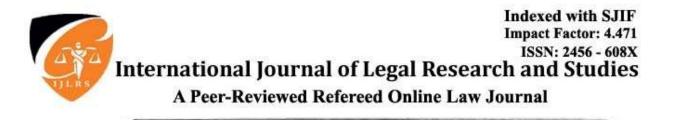
The SDGs have been built on decades of work by nations and the UN, including the UN 'Department of Economic and Social Affairs'.

In June 1992, at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, more than 178 countries adopted Agenda 21, a thorough plan of action to assemble a global partnership for sustainable development to improve human lives and safeguard the environment.

Member States unanimously embraced the Millennium Declaration at the Millennium Summit in September 2000 at UN HQ in New York. The Summit led to the expansion of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to decrease drastic poverty by 2015.

The 'Johannesburg Declaration' on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation assumed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in South Africa in 2002 reaffirmed the global community's obligations to poverty eradication and the environment and built on Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration by comprising more priority on multilateral partnerships.

At the 'United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development' (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, Member States adopted the outcome document "The Future We Want", in which they agreed to

launch a process to formulate a set of SDGs to build upon the MDGs and to establish the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The Rio +20 outcome also contained other measures for implementing sustainable development, including mandates for future programmes of work in development financing, small island developing states and more.

In 2013, the General Assembly set up a 30-member 'Open Working Group' to develop an SDG proposal. In January 2015, the General Assembly commenced the negotiation process on the post-2015 development schedule. The process culminated in the subsequent adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with 17 SDGs at its core, at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015.

2015 was a landmark year for multilateralism and international policy shaping, with the adoption of several major agreements:

1. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (March 2015)
2. Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development (July 2015)
3. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 SDGs was adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September 2015.
4. Paris Agreement on Climate Change (December 2015)

The annual High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development serves as the central UN platform for the follow-up and review of the SDGs.

Today, the 'Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG)' in the 'United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)' provides substantive aid and capacity-building for the SDGs and their related thematic issues, including water, energy, climate, oceans, urbanization, transport, science and technology, the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), partnerships and Small Island Developing States. DSDG plays a crucial role in evaluating the UN system-wide implementation of the 2030 Agenda and in advocacy and outreach activities relating to the SDGs. To make the 2030 Agenda an actuality, broad ownership of the SDGs must decipher into a stra robust obligation by all stakeholders to implement the global goals. DSDG aims to help stimulate this engagement.[1]

THE IMPLEMENTATION

1. **No poverty:**- End poverty in all its forms everywhere

The Indian government has long made eradicating poverty a top priority. Despite considerable progress, poverty is still a significant problem in the nation, especially in rural areas.
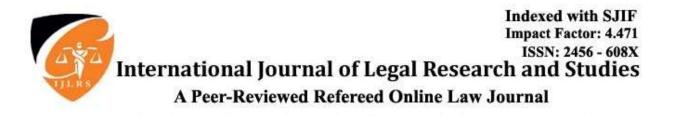
Who is deemed to be living in poverty by the Indian government is determined by a poverty line. The cost of a minimum amount of food and other essentials is used to calculate the poverty line, which is then periodically updated for inflation. According to the most recent data, India's poverty rate reduced dramatically over the past ten years, from 21.9% in 2011 to 14.6% in 2018. However, a sizable portion of the population continues to live in poverty.

The Indian government has implemented various measures and programmes to combat poverty. These consist of the following:

The 'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)' ensures that bucolic households receive 100 days of paid work annually.

The 'National Rural Livelihoods Mission' promoted rural households' ability to work independently.

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[1] https://sdgs.un.org/goals

Low-cost food grains are distributed through the Public Distribution System (PDS) to households below the poverty level.

The 'Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana' offers affordable housing to low-income and economically disadvantaged populations.

Women below the poverty line can receive free cooking gas hookups through the 'Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana'.

The 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana programme seeks to give more low-income people access to credit and financial inclusion.

Various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector groups are working on poverty reduction in India in addition to these government measures to enhance access to economic opportunities, health care, and education for those who live in poverty.

However, despite these initiatives, poverty continues to be a significant issue in India, particularly in rural regions. The COVID-19 pandemic further hurt the economy, and the number of underprivileged individuals rose drastically. The Indian government and other organizations are still working on methods and programmes to help poor people.

2. **Zero hunger**:- The main objective is to eliminate starvation, acquire food security, improve nutritional nourishment, and promote sustainable agriculture.

India has a sizable population, much of which is impoverished, making it challenging for people to obtain enough food to meet their needs. To combat hunger and food insecurity, the Indian government has established several initiatives and programmes.

The National Food Security Act is one such policy which ensures a specific quantity of food grains to households at significantly reduced costs. This law aims to give up to 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population legal access to food grains that have received subsidies.

The government also manages the Midday Meal Scheme, which offers free lunches to children who are enrolled in school to boost attendance and treat malnutrition.

Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and charitable groups are fighting to end India's hunger. Families in need can turn to these groups for food assistance, education, and support for activities that generate revenue.

The 'Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)' says India has a sizable agricultural sector and is nevertheless a significant net exporter of food. Smallholder farmers make up a sizable section of the country's population and produce a sizable portion of the food consumed by the populace.
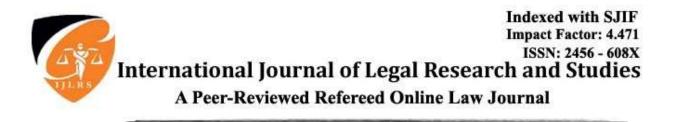
3. **Good health and well-being**:- The main rationale of this goal is to ensure healthy lives and to promote well-being for all people.

Access to healthcare is a significant issue in India. Although the country has an extensive public healthcare system, most healthcare services are provided by the private sector, which can be costly and out of reach for many people, particularly those living in rural areas or with low incomes. In addition, there is a need for more healthcare professionals, particularly in rural areas, which limits access to care.

One of India's primary health challenges is infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. India also has a high burden of non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer.

Health issues are also associated with poor nutrition and sanitation, particularly in rural areas, which contribute to high malnutrition rates and infectious diseases.

The Indian government has implemented many programs and initiatives to improve health and well-being in the country.

'National Health Mission (NHM)' aims to improve access to healthcare and health outcomes in rural areas. The 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)', also known as Ayushman Bharat, provides free healthcare coverage to more than 500 million families in India.

The 'National Vector Borne Disease Control Program aims to reduce the incidence of vector-borne diseases, such as malaria and dengue fever.

The 'National Cancer Control Program' aims to reduce the burden of cancer by increasing access to cancer care and promoting cancer awareness.

4. **Quality Education**:- The aim of this goal is to Guarantee inclusive and unbiased education and promote lifelong learning prospects for all.

Ensuring a quality education for all students is an ongoing challenge in India. Several initiatives and programs are in place to improve the country's education rate.

The Indian government operates a public school system, which is free and open to all students. However, the quality of education these schools provide varies widely, and many schools need to be funded and staffed. In addition, there is a need for more qualified teachers in many areas, which affects the grade of education delivered.

One of the key initiatives to improve the quality of education in India is the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)'. This government program aims to provide universal access to elementary education. The program focuses on improving infrastructure, increasing the number of teachers, and promoting education for girls and children from disadvantaged groups.

Another important initiative is the 'Right to Education Act (RTE)', passed in 2009 and "guarantees free and compulsory education for all children aged 6 to 14". The act also lays out minimum standards for schools, such as the ratio of students to teachers and a prescribed curriculum.

In addition to these government initiatives, some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector organizations are working to improve the quality of education in India. These organizations focus on educating children from disadvantaged groups, such as children from low-income families, children living in rural areas, and children from marginalized communities. They also improve girls' access to quality education and provide teachers with training.
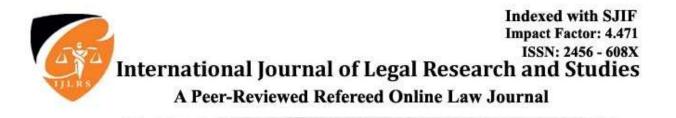
Despite these efforts, the quality of education in India still varies greatly, and access to quality education is challenging for many students. The Indian government, along with other organizations, continues to work on improving the country's education system, emphasizing increasing access and improving the quality of education.

5. **Gender equality**:- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Gender equality and empowering women and girls is a complex issue in India. Despite some progress, women and girls in India still face significant challenges regarding access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. They also face significant levels of violence and discrimination.

The Indian government has implemented several policies and programs aimed at achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls. One such initiative is the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, which was adopted in 2001. This policy aims to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through several measures, such as increasing access to education and healthcare, promoting economic empowerment, and strengthening legal protections for women.

Another important initiative is the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (Save Girl Child, Educate Girl Child) campaign, which was launched in 2015 to address the issue of gender-biased sex selection and promote the education and empowerment of girls.

The National Mission for Empowerment of Women, which has been implemented since 2010, aims to empower women by addressing the issues of domestic violence, sexual harassment in the workplace, and discrimination against women.

In addition to these government initiatives, several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector organizations are working to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls in India. These organizations focus on women's rights, violence against women, and economic empowerment.

The Indian government and other organizations continue to work towards achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls through policies and programs. Despite these efforts, women and girls in India still face significant challenges regarding access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Gender-based violence and discrimination against women are also essential issues in the country.

It is important to note that gender equality and women's empowerment is a complex and multifaceted issue; it requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the various challenges women and girls face.

6.   **Clean water and sanitation**:- Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.[2]

Ensuring water and sanitation availability and sustainable management is a significant challenge in India, particularly in rural areas. The Indian government has implemented some initiatives and programs to address this challenge.

One key initiative is the National Rural Drinking Water Program (NRDWP), launched in 2009 to provide safe drinking water to rural populations. The program aims to improve access to safe drinking water by constructing water supply schemes and rehabilitating existing ones.

Another initiative is the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission), launched in 2014 to improve the level of cleanliness in the country and provide access to toilets, particularly in rural areas. The initiative aims to end open defecation and improve the management of solid and liquid waste.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swachh_Bharat_Mission

The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) was launched in 2019, which aims to provide functional household tap connections to every rural household by 2024, improving the availability of safe drinking water.

In addition to these government initiatives, several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector organizations are working to improve the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation in India. These organizations focus on water conservation, rainwater harvesting, and the construction of toilets in rural areas.
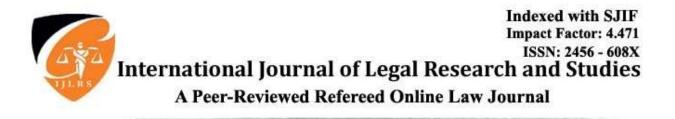
Despite these efforts, access to clean water and sanitation remains a significant challenge in India. This is particularly true in rural areas, where there needs to be more infrastructure, and a lack of resources can make it challenging to improve access to water and sanitation.

The government and other organizations continue to work on improving the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation in India through the development of infrastructure and promoting conservation and sustainable water management practices.

7.   **Affordable and clean energy**:- Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy.

Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy is a crucial challenge in India. The country has a large population and a rapidly growing economy, leading to increased energy demand.[3]

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[2] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/waterandsanitation

[3] https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/sustainable-development-goals/why-do-sustainable-development-goals-matter/goal-7

The Indian government has implemented several initiatives and programs to increase access to energy and promote sustainable energy development.[4]

The Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya), launched in 2017, aims to provide electricity to all households in the country by 2020.

The National Solar Mission, launched in 2010, aims to increase the share of solar power in the country's energy mix.

The National Biofuels Policy, released in 2018, aims to increase the use of biofuels as a source of energy.

The National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) aims to put 5-6 million electric vehicles on Indian roads by 2020.

In addition to these government initiatives, several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector organizations are working to increase access to energy and promote sustainable energy development in India. These organizations focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and distributed energy generation issues.

To achieve the goal of sustainable and modern energy for all, the Indian government continues to work on increasing access to energy, promoting energy efficiency and conservation, and increasing renewable energy sources. Despite these efforts, access to energy remains a significant challenge in India, particularly in rural areas. The country also still relies heavily on fossil fuels as its primary energy source.

8. **Decent work and economic growth**:- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Decent work and economic growth are closely linked in India. The Indian economy has been growing at a steady pace in recent years, and this has led to the creation of more job opportunities, particularly in the service sector. However, many of these jobs are informal. They lack social protections, which is why the government has been promoting decent work through policies such as the National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. The government has also been working on initiatives to improve access to credit and other financial services for small businesses and entrepreneurs to encourage economic growth and job creation.

9. **Industry innovation and infrastructure**:- Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
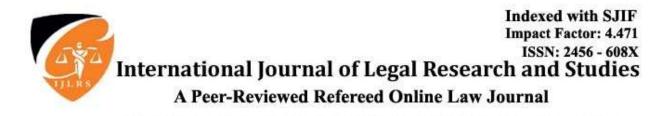
The Indian government has taken several steps to promote sustainable industry innovation and infrastructure.

In terms of sustainable industry innovation, the government has been promoting research and development in clean energy, electric vehicles, and renewable energy. The government has also provided financial incentives and subsidies to companies that invest in these areas.

In terms of infrastructure, the government has been investing heavily in building new transportation and energy infrastructure that is more sustainable and efficient. This includes building new airports, ports, and highways, expanding the country's power grid and building new power plants that run on clean energy.

The government has also promoted sustainable and green building practices, emphasizing energy-efficient buildings and intelligent cities. Additionally, the government has been working on initiatives to improve waste management, water conservation and smart water management.

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[4] https://www.iwisebusiness.com/education-policy-of-india-past-vs-present-vs-future/

The government has also promoted sustainable and green building practices, emphasizing energy-efficient buildings and smart cities. Additionally, the government has been working on initiatives to improve waste management, water conservation and smart water management.

Overall, the Indian government has been taking a multifaceted approach to promote sustainable industry innovation and infrastructure, with a focus on both policy and investment.

10. **Reduced inequality**:- Reduce inequality within and among countries

One key area of focus has been on improving access to education and healthcare for marginalized and disadvantaged groups. The government has been working to improve the quality of teaching and healthcare in rural and remote areas. It has also provided financial assistance to low-income families to help them afford these services.

The government has also improved the economic opportunities available to marginalized and disadvantaged groups. This includes initiatives to improve access to credit and other financial services for small businesses and entrepreneurs and programs to create jobs in rural and remote areas.

Additionally, the government has been implementing programs and policies to empower marginalized and disadvantaged groups, such as programs for women and children, and policies to promote the rights of marginalized groups such as Dalits and tribals.

Another important initiative is the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) which guarantees 100 days of paid employment to rural households. This act has helped to reduce poverty and improve the standard of living of people in rural areas.

11. **Sustainable cities and communities**:- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

One key focus area has been promoting sustainable urban planning and development. The government has been working to improve the quality and accessibility of public transportation, promote walkable and bike-friendly cities, and encourage the development of green spaces and parks.

The government has also been working to improve energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. This includes initiatives to promote energy-efficient buildings and renewable energy sources and programs to retrofit existing buildings to make them more energy efficient.
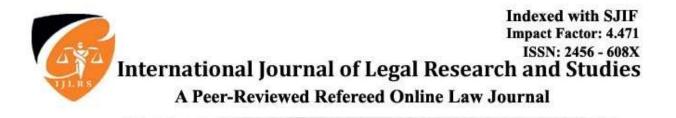
Another key initiative is the Smart Cities Mission, which aims to develop 100 smart cities across India by promoting technology and data to improve urban services and infrastructure, such as water supply, transportation, and waste management.

The government also has been promoting sustainable waste management practices and implementing several policies and initiatives to reduce solid waste generation and encourage recycling and composting.

Overall, the Indian government has been taking a multifaceted approach to promote sustainable cities and communities, focusing on sustainable urban planning and development, energy efficiency, and using technology and data to improve urban services and infrastructure.

12. **Responsible consumption and production**:- Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

One key focus area has been promoting sustainable and responsible consumption patterns. This includes initiatives to promote energy efficiency, reduce waste, and encourage using environmentally-friendly products and services. The government has also launched several campaigns to create awareness about responsible consumption and production.

The government has also promoted sustainable and responsible production practices in various sectors, including agriculture, industry, and services. This includes initiatives to promote clean energy and energy-efficient technologies, reduce waste and pollution, and encourage sustainable raw materials and production methods.

The government has also promoted sustainable supply chain management by encouraging companies to adopt sustainable procurement practices and providing training and resources to help companies implement responsible production and consumption practices.

Additionally, the government has been implementing laws, regulations and standards to promote responsible consumption and production. This includes regulations on hazardous chemicals and waste regulations, product labelling and packaging, and environmental and social performance standards.

13. **Climate action**:- Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Climate action has been a priority for the Government of India in recent years. The country is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and adverse effects on agriculture and food security.

The Indian government has been working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase the share of renewable energy in the country's energy mix. This includes initiatives to promote clean energy, such as solar and wind power, and to increase energy efficiency in buildings and industry.

The government has also been working to promote sustainable transportation, such as by developing public transportation infrastructure and promoting electric vehicles.

The government has also been promoting sustainable land use and biodiversity conservation through initiatives such as afforestation, reforestation and conservation of wetlands and mangroves.

In addition to these efforts, India has also actively participated in international climate negotiations and submitted its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. It has also been working with other countries to promote global climate action.

Overall, the Indian government has been taking a multifaceted approach to climate action, focusing on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency, and protecting vulnerable communities and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change.

14. **Life below water**:- Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Life below water is an important issue for India as the country has a long coastline and a rich marine biodiversity. The Indian government has taken several steps to protect and conserve life below water in the country.

One key area of focus has been on protecting and conserving marine biodiversity. This includes initiatives to protect and conserve critical marine habitats, such as coral reefs and mangroves, and efforts to protect endangered marine species, such as sea turtles and dolphins.
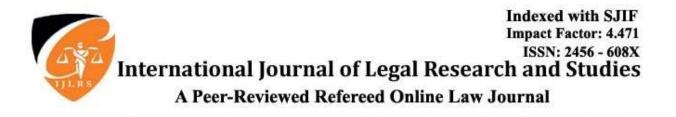
The government has also promoted sustainable fisheries and aquaculture practices by regulating fishing activities and encouraging sustainable fishing methods.

Additionally, the government has been working to improve coastal water quality and prevent marine pollution. This includes efforts to control and avoid oil spills and initiatives to reduce plastic waste and other forms of pollution in the ocean.

The government has also promoted sustainable tourism in coastal areas by developing ecotourism infrastructure and encouraging sustainable tourism practices.

15. **Life on land**:- Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss.

Life on land is an essential issue for India, which is home to a rich diversity of plant and animal species and many important ecosystems. The Indian government has taken several steps to protect and conserve life on land in the country.

One key area of focus has been on protecting and conserving biodiversity. This includes initiatives to protect and preserve important habitats, such as forests and wetlands, and efforts to protect endangered species, such as tigers and elephants.

The government has also promoted sustainable land use by regulating the conversion of natural habitats for agriculture and urban development and encouraging sustainable agricultural and forestry practices.

Additionally, the government has been working to improve land management through initiatives such as soil conservation and reforestation programs.

The government has also promoted sustainable tourism in protected areas by developing ecotourism infrastructure and encouraging sustainable tourism practices.

Overall, the Indian government has been taking a multifaceted approach to protecting and conserving life on land in the country, focusing on protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainable land use and management, preventing habitat destruction and promoting sustainable tourism practices.

16. **Peace justice and strong institutions**:- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

One key area of focus has been on maintaining internal security and peace. This includes efforts to combat terrorism, insurgency, and other forms of violence and initiatives to promote dialogue and reconciliation among different communities and groups.

The government has also been working to strengthen the justice system through initiatives such as increasing access to justice for marginalized groups, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the legal system, and promoting the rule of law.

Additionally, the government has been working to strengthen institutions through initiatives such as capacity building, good governance and anti-corruption efforts.

The Indian government has also been working to promote human rights and democracy through initiatives such as protecting the rights of marginalized groups and encouraging political participation and civic engagement.

17. **Partnership for the goals**:- Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

The partnership for the goals, also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is a global effort to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. India has been actively working towards achieving these goals through partnerships with various stakeholders, including government, private sector, civil society organizations and international organizations.
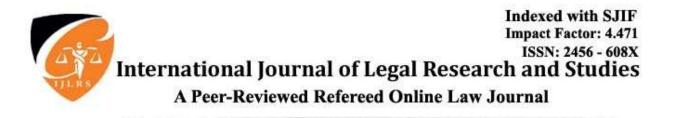
One key area of focus has been on collaboration with the private sector. The government has been working with businesses to promote sustainable development and achieve the SDGs through public-private partnerships and corporate social responsibility programs.

The government has also been working with civil society and non-governmental organizations to promote sustainable development and achieve the SDGs. These organizations have actively worked in education, health, environment, and poverty reduction areas.

Additionally, the government has been working with international organizations such as the United Nations, World Bank and bilateral partners to promote sustainable development and to achieve the SDGs. These organizations have provided the government with technical, financial, and other support to achieve the SDGs.

"The four objectives of sustainable development are:
• Stable economic growth- Eradicating poverty and hunger to ensuring a healthy life.

• <u>Conservation of natural resources</u> - Achieve universal access to essential services such as water, sanitation, and sustainable energy.
• <u>Social progress and equality</u> - Reduce inequalities in the world, especially gender inequalities. Supporting the generation by developing opportunities through inclusive education and decent work. Foster innovation and resilient infrastructures by creating communities and cities capable of producing and consuming sustainably.
• <u>Environmental protection</u> - Caring for the environment by combating climate change and protecting oceans and terrestrial ecosystems[5]"

IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Everybody is entitled to a healthy, safe, and clean environment. Ecologically sustainable economic growth is another name for the concept of Sustainable Development. The goal of which is to achieve consensus between environmental sustainability, financial sustainability, and socio-political sustainability. Sustainable development consistently enables us to save and enhance our resources by gradually transforming how we evolve and use technologies. All Countries should satisfy their basic needs of employment, food, energy, water, and sanitation. Sustainable development goals can fast complete this by reducing pollution, poverty, and unemployment.

Why does India need to accomplish sustainable development goals?

India as a nation is entrepreneurial and is at the apex of changes. More than 70% of the world's population lives in cities. Cities already consume 80% of global material and energy supplies and produce 75% carbon emissions. India is the youngest country, and its youth needs to be engaged in early action to create and sustain a long-term momentum that can help the country see its targets.

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[5] https://nebeskie.com/blogs/sustainable_Development_Goals.htm
Debate on sustainable development