Drivers of Change

a. **_Science and Technology_**
- Drivers of industrialisation
- Contributed directly to economic and social changes.
- Cutting-edge technology improves productivity, increases convenience.
    - Technology has revolutionised our lives, from medicine to defence. Scientific knowledge aids in medical treatments like radiation therapy and medical imaging. Medical technology has led to better diagnosis and treatment of diseases, resulting in improved patient outcomes and longer life expectancy. New industries are created, from space exploration to new frontiers of social media.

- Shift in paradigms of thinking and the impact on society.
    - A paradigm shift occurs when the prevailing way of thinking within a scientific community undergoes a significant change, impacting both scientific knowledge and societal norms. The shift typically progresses through several stages:

Normal Science	Scientists work within established frameworks, solving puzzles and expanding knowledge. This stage is marked by consensus and productivity.
Crisis	Anomalies challenge the existing paradigm, causing doubt and dissatisfaction among scientists. Observations that cannot be explained lead to questioning the validity of the paradigm.
Revolution	New paradigm emerges, offering a different perspective. Initially proposed by a minority, it faces resistance from the majority loyal to the old paradigm. A struggle for acceptance ensues.
Paradigm Change	The new paradigm gains support and evidence, eventually replacing the old one. This shift alters scientific worldview and language

- Why does a paradigm shift matter?
    - A paradigm shift is crucial as it not only impacts scientific understanding but also influences social and cultural aspects of society. It alters how we perceive and interact with the world around us.
    - Advances human understanding and innovation by opening up new possibilities and opportunities for exploring and explaining reality, solving problems, and creating new technologies. A paradigm shift can lead to breakthroughs and discoveries that transform our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.
    - Challenges existing beliefs and practices: challenge or contradict the existing beliefs and practices of society, especially those that are based on or influenced by the old paradigm. A paradigm shift can cause conflicts or tensions between different groups or individuals who have different views or interests. For example, the paradigm shift from creationism to evolutionism challenged the religious and moral views of many people, and sparked debates and controversies over the origin and meaning of life.
    - Changes the social structure and dynamics: A paradigm shift can alter the power relations, the status, and the identity of the scientists and other actors involved in the scientific enterprise. A paradigm shift can also affect the funding, the education, and the communication of science. For example, the paradigm shift from geocentrism to heliocentrism changed the authority and the role of the church and the astronomers in the medieval society, and influenced the development of the scientific method and the modern science.

Consider: What challenges does a paradigm shift pose for society?

b. Globalisation:
- Economic Globalisation
  - Permeable borders, expanding markets, economic integration
  - Improved quality and variety in our lives
- Cultural Globalisation
  - Openness to diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- Political Globalisation
  - Expansion of political activities, cooperation and even governance beyond national borders/boundaries.
  - Institutions encompass a wide array of entities, including Non-Governmental Organizations, security alliances, and trade coalitions. Notable examples include the United Nations, World Health Organization, World Trade Organization, African Union, Amnesty International, and the International Criminal Court.
  - These entities exert increasing influence, shaping global governance and contributing to the evolving landscape of international relations.

'In the global age we inhabit, there is no justification for national boundaries.' How far do you agree?	
How does economic globalisation affect job opportunities? What are the benefits of economic integration?	How does cultural globalisation enrich society? Consider the political reach of countries in their use of soft power.

c. The Media
Rapid advancements in technology have transformed the media landscape, making information more accessible and diverse. The media plays a crucial role in shaping opinions, disseminating information, and influencing societal trends. The media provides a platform for public discourse and holds power-holders accountable.

How does the media influence public perception? What are the responsibilities of media organisations?

d. Liberalisation
- Access and quality of education have improved, empowering individuals to make informed decisions. Education fosters critical thinking, creativity, and social mobility, leading to personal fulfillment and economic growth.
- Changing social standards reflect evolving values and attitudes towards issues such as gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, and multiculturalism. Diversity enriches society by promoting inclusion and innovation, growing spaces for people whjo might not fit previous rigid molds set by society.
- Liberalisation & the economy
  - Cryptocurrency provides a decentralised and secure means of conducting transactions Cryptocurrency like Bitcoin offers decentralisation and anonymity, challenging traditional financial systems.
  - Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) are changing how we perceive ownership and value in the digital realm. NFTs allow for the creation and trade of unique digital assets, promoting digital ownership and monetisation of digital content.

'Power these days lies more with the people than the politicians.' To what extent is this true? (2021 GCE A Levels)
Examples to consider: a. James Stephen "Jimmy" Donaldson aka MrBeast with 257 million Youtube subscribers. b. Sergey Brin & Larry Page c. Shah Rukh Khan/ Rajinkanth/ Sachin Tendulkar

Issues we are facing

a. *Changing Societies*
- Ageing society puts pressure on social and economic systems.
- Migration both within and between countries. People are displaced by climate change, while others are moving due to political circumstances and affiliations.
- Urban population growth is still high. The United Nations predicts that two-thirds of the world will live in urban areas by 2050. Africa and Asia will see the steepest growth, with Asia, in particular, carrying 64 % of the planet's urban population by then.

With the growing pressure in cities, governments have been seeking ways to redefine liveability. Understand what a 'smart city' entails and how it might inadvertently escalate inequality.

- Populations are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse in many countries. Religion and spirituality are becoming less tied to geography and more diverse within countries and regions.
- Traditional definitions of gender, sexuality, ethnicity and identity are becoming less restrictive and more inclusive. Technology has enabled different online/offline personalities, offering fluidity in how and when one identifies a particular way.

b. *Tech- Acceleration (& Toll)*

- The pace of advances in technology is increasing, and its pervasiveness is causing concern. Six in ten have access to the internet globally, with the highest regional penetration rates occurring in North America and Europe.
- Technology now ranges from the metaverse to virtual reality (VR) with new industries opening up like nonfungible tokens (NFTs), virtual real estate and Web3 technologies.
- AI can <u>increase expectations</u> for governments, regulators and businesses and put <u>pressure on the individuals</u> who cannot access or understand such technologies.
- Retailers and manufacturers are increasingly looking for ways that <u>automation can support or replace</u> employees.
- Many are pushing back on technology: Gen Z are using social media less often than prior years, there are anti-tech actions, and information overload has reduced our collective attention span.

To what extent is artificial intelligence replacing the role of humans? (2019 GCE A Levels)

c. *In/equalities*

- Middle-class incomes are becoming less influential in advanced economies, while Asia-Pacific middle class will account for the majority of global middle-class spending. In many markets, there is <u>growing wealth inequity</u>. (FYI: Millennials are likely to be poorer than Gen X and baby boomers were at the same age!)
- Why does the middle-class matter?
    - If the middle class shrinks, it often means there are more rich people and more poor people. Should more of the middle class fall further behind, they are also at risk of being forced into poverty.
    - For businesses, the middle class is an <u>essential source of customers and revenue</u>. Without a robust middle class, companies may struggle to survive.
    - The increasing gap between the rich and poor can cause <u>dissatisfaction</u> and <u>political instability</u>.
    - Even for the wealthier, those with high and rising incomes tend to become <u>disconnected</u> – physically and psychologically – from the people who might be much poorer. With that disconnection, it can undermine support for redistribution (charity or resistance to higher tax rates as a form of redistribution of wealth).

d. *Environmental Challenges*

Access the view that attempts to control climate change can never be truly effective. (2017 GCE A Levels)

e. __Political Splintering__

- Cooperation has begun to plateau. Geopolitical tensions, including the rivalry between China and the United States and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, are a major factor, while renewed war in the Middle East could also lead to broader disruptions in the region, particularly disruptions to energy resources, and threaten peace and stability.
    o The pandemic showed how supply chains can be threatened, contributing to the rise of nationalism in some countries.

"The multiplication of far-reaching techniques of communication has two important results. In the first place, it increases the sheer radius of communication, so that for certain purposes the whole civilized world is made the psychological equivalent of a primitive tribe." - Edward Sapir [1933]

- Modern Tribalism
    o Tendency of individuals to form groups or communities based on shared identities, beliefs, or interests (similar to traditional tribal societies).
    o Groups can form from ethnicity, nationality, religion, or shared interests. The idea of tribalism can manifest in various aspects of contemporary society, including politics, social media, sports and cultural affiliations (fandoms).
    o Modern social groups can demonstrate strong group loyalty, a sense of belonging, and a tendency to define themselves in opposition to other groups.
    o Belonging to a tribe gives a sense of safety and identity and even purpose.
- The problem with tribalism today
    o Modern tribalism can lead to polarization and division within society. When people identify strongly with a particular group, they may become less tolerant of those who hold different beliefs or belong to different tribes.
    o In the age of social media, modern tribalism can lead to the formation of echo chambers, where individuals are exposed only to information and viewpoints that align with their own beliefs. This can reinforce biases, prevent constructive dialogue, and hinder the exchange of ideas between different groups.
    o Modern tribalism often reinforces confirmation bias, where individuals seek out information that confirms their existing beliefs and ignore or dismiss evidence to the contrary. This can lead to closed-mindedness and the spread of misinformation within tribal communities.
    o Modern tribalism is often associated with identity politics, where individuals prioritise their group identity (such as race, gender, religion, or political affiliation) over common goals or shared values.
    o Us vs. Them Mentality can lead to hostility, prejudice, and discrimination towards out-group members, perpetuating social division.

f. **_Well- Being_**

How far is the pursuit of happiness the most important human goal? (2021 GCE A Levels)

Understanding Well- Being

Factors affecting happiness:

Income	Employment	Work satisfaction
Freedom and equality	Safety	Values and Religion
Mental health	Physical health	Family
Gender	Age	Education

What are the 3 main constituents of happiness for you? Would your answers change if…
1. You were a female child in country that commonly practices female infanticide?
2. You were a refugee fleeing conflict in your home country. How does your journey to safety and resettlement in a new country differ from that of someone born into a stable and prosperous society?
3. You were an elderly person living alone on a fixed income?
4. You're a member of a marginalised ethnic or racial group in a society where discrimination is prevalent?

Where do we go from here?

From…	To	How to Cope with BANI? Focus on:
V	B	Resilience
U	A	Empathy
C	N	Improvisation
A	I	Intuition