

SOCIAL ISSUES

Table of Contents

1. ISSUES RELATED TO VULNERABLE SECTIONS	2	3.6. Vaccine Hesitancy	43
1.1. Issues Related To Women	3	3.7. Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Act, 2021	44
1.1.1. Gender Violence and COVID-19	3	4. EDUCATION	46
1.1.2. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme	5	4.1. Education System	46
1.1.3. Dowry System in India	6	4.2. National Education Policy	47
1.1.4. Unpaid Work	10	4.2.1. Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS) Project	49
1.1.5. Feminization of Agriculture	10	4.3. Higher Education in India	50
1.1.6. STEM Career Opportunities for Women in India	11	4.4. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)	52
1.1.7. Women and Trade: The Role of Trade in Promoting Women's Equality	12	4.5. Learning Poverty	53
1.2. Issues Related to Children	14	4.5.1. National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat)	54
1.2.1. Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012	17	4.6. Digital Divide in Education Sector	55
1.2.2. Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2021	18	4.7. Private Sector Participation in Education System	57
1.2.3. Child Labour	20	5. POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES	60
1.2.4. Child Adoption	21	5.1. Migration	60
1.2.5. Child Marriage	22	5.1.1. Internal Migrants	61
1.3. The Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021	24	5.2. Social Security for Informal Workers	62
1.4. Elderly in India	25	5.3. Prevention of Begging	64
1.5. Persons with Disabilities	27	5.4. Manual Scavenging	65
1.6. Transgender	28	6. NUTRITION AND SANITATION	67
1.7. Indigenous People	30	6.1. National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013	67
1.7.1. State of the World's Indigenous Peoples	31	6.2. National Scheme for PM Poshan Shakti Nirman	68
2. DEMOGRAPHY	32	6.3. Global Hunger Index 2021	70
2.1. Population Control Policy	32	6.4. Sanitation	73
3. HEALTH	34	6.4.1. Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	73
3.1. Health Care System	34	7. MISCELLANEOUS	76
3.1.1. Secondary Health Care in India	35	7.1. Urbanisation of Pandemics	76
3.1.2. Universal Health Coverage	36	7.2. The Human Capital Index 2020	77
3.2. Digitalisation of Health Infrastructure	37	7.3. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	79
3.3. Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)	39	7.3.1. SDG India Index 2021: NITI Aayog	80
3.3.1. Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSN)	40	7.3.2. SDG Investor Map for India	81
3.4. National Medical Commission	41	7.4. Paternity Leave	82
3.5. COVID 19 and Mental Health	42		



Previous Year Questions

A reference sheet of syllabus-wise segregated previous year questions from 2013-2020 (for the Social Issues Section) has been provided. In conjunction with the document, it will help in understanding the demand of the exam and developing a thought process for writing good answers.



A NOTE FOR THE STUDENTS



Dear Students,

Every year with Mains 365 documents, we aim to provide consolidated content keeping in mind the demand of the exam and the corresponding needs of the students. This necessitates keeping pace with changing pattern of the examination.

Over the course of last 3-4 years, the nature of questions in the Mains examination has changed significantly. Questions are becoming more conceptual, and more holistic in nature (i.e., having an amalgamation of both static and current parts), for e.g. the question on COVID-19 and class inequalities in Mains 2020 examination.

In this context we have made following additions in the document:

- **Topic at glance:** Topic at glance have been added to the Mains 365 Social Issues document. These topic at glance seek to:



Act as a bridge **connecting the static information** and the analysis of the current events.



Give a **360-degree view of the comprehensive topics** like Child Related issues, Health, Education etc.



Provide essential data/initiatives related to the topic for **quick revision and replication in the examination.**

- **Infographics:** Infographics have been added in the document in a manner that they can readily be replicated in the examination through flowcharts, pie charts, maps etc., thereby improving the presentation of the content in the answers.

- **Previous year questions:** A QR code to the syllabus-wise segregated Previous Year Questions has been provided for student's reference. These will act as a guiding light for developing a thought process required for writing good answers.

The document seeks to not only provide a one stop solution for Social Issues Current Affairs but it also seeks to develop a coherent thought process required for effective and well presented answer. Therefore, the articles in the document are not only to be read for content but also for understanding and adopting good practices of answer writing.

We hope that the coverage of the content in an organized manner will assist you in performing well in the examination.

Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

All the best!
Team VisionIAS

1. ISSUES RELATED TO VULNERABLE SECTIONS

1.1. ISSUES RELATED TO WOMEN

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VaW)

Violence against women

Any **act of gender-based violence** that results in, or is likely to result in, **physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women and girls.**

- Occurs throughout the life cycle from pre-birth (e.g. Sex selective abortion), infancy (e.g. Female infanticide), childhood (e.g. Child Marriage), adolescence (e.g. Trafficking), adulthood (e.g. Domestic violence) to senescence (e.g. Abuse of widows).
- Globally 1 in 3 women experience some form of violence in their lifetimes.

Community Factors: Rigid patriarchal gender norms; High levels of poverty and unemployment; Low presence of women in public space; Popular culture promoting toxic masculinity; Marginalisation etc.



Factors making women vulnerable to violence

Societal Factors: Traditional and cultural practices; Honour Killings; Low levels of women's access to education and employment; Discriminatory laws; Absence or lack of enforcement of laws; Gender discrimination in institutions; Early marriage etc.

Individual Factors: High levels of inequality in relationships; Use of drugs and harmful use of alcohol; Internalised misogyny etc.

Interpersonal Factors: Childhood experience of violence; Mental disorders; Violence supportive attitudes.

Impacts of VaW

- Human rights violation.
- Perpetuates Gender Inequality.
- Inter-generational psychological and/or physical impacts on children
- Estimated to cost countries up to 3.7 percent of their GDP.
- Hurdle to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Impacts achievement of SDG 1 (No poverty), 3 (Good Health and well being), 4 (Quality education), 5 (Gender Equality), 6 (Clean water and sanitation), 8 (Decent work and economic growth), 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), 16 (Peace, Justice and strong institutions).

Steps taken in India to combat VaW

- The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act of 2013 and 2018 strengthened criminal laws related to VaW and prescribed stringent punishments.
- New IT Rules to deal with Cyber-violence against women
- Progressive Supreme Court judgments
- Establishment of National Commission for Women.
- Schemes/Initiatives: Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs); Cyber Police Stations and Cyber Crime Cells; Ujjawala Scheme; Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs); Nirbhaya Fund; Swadhar Greh Scheme; One Stop Centres (OSCs); Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme; Sexual Harassment electronic Box (SHe-Box) etc.
- Ratification of International Conventions: Like Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
- State level initiatives: Himmat app by the Delhi police, Samman Campaign by Madhya Pradesh Police, Pink Protection project by Kerala Government, Operation Durachari in Uttar Pradesh etc.

Challenges in India

- Issues related to implementation of laws: Overburdened judiciary; Low conviction rates; Ambiguity in law and definitions; Apathy among police force and healthcare workers; Few female police; Under-reporting; Stereotyping and gender bias in the justice system.
- Societal issues: Acceptance and tolerance of violence in society; Hard to detect violations; Existence of Extrajudicial Courts; Lack of attention to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.
- Other issues: The amendments made to the criminal law are not comprehensive; Paucity of data available on crimes against women; Lack of safe infrastructure.

Way Ahead to holistically tackle VaW in India

- Administrative, legal and judicial reforms: Increasing the number of female police officers; Improving data collection on all forms of violence; Address capacity constraints in the judiciary and enhance coordination among authorities; Amend, harmonize, or enact laws protecting women and girls from all forms of violence.
- Enhancing Protection, support, and assistance to complainants/survivors: Gender sensitisation of personnel; Strengthening Community-level platforms (like SHGs); Provision of Legal and psychological support services; Protecting privacy, identity and dignity of victims; Providing Redressal against cyber-violence; Upholding reproductive rights as basic Human rights.
- Strategies for changing the societal norms of gender inequality and raising the status of women: Focus on making women financially independent; Scaling up interventions that work with men; Reclaiming the public spaces for women; Use of technology and emerging concepts for ensuring safer and gender friendly infrastructures and spaces; Education programmes to deconstruct and dismantle patriarchal ideologies; Working with community and religious leaders.

1.1.1. GENDER VIOLENCE AND COVID-19

Why in News?

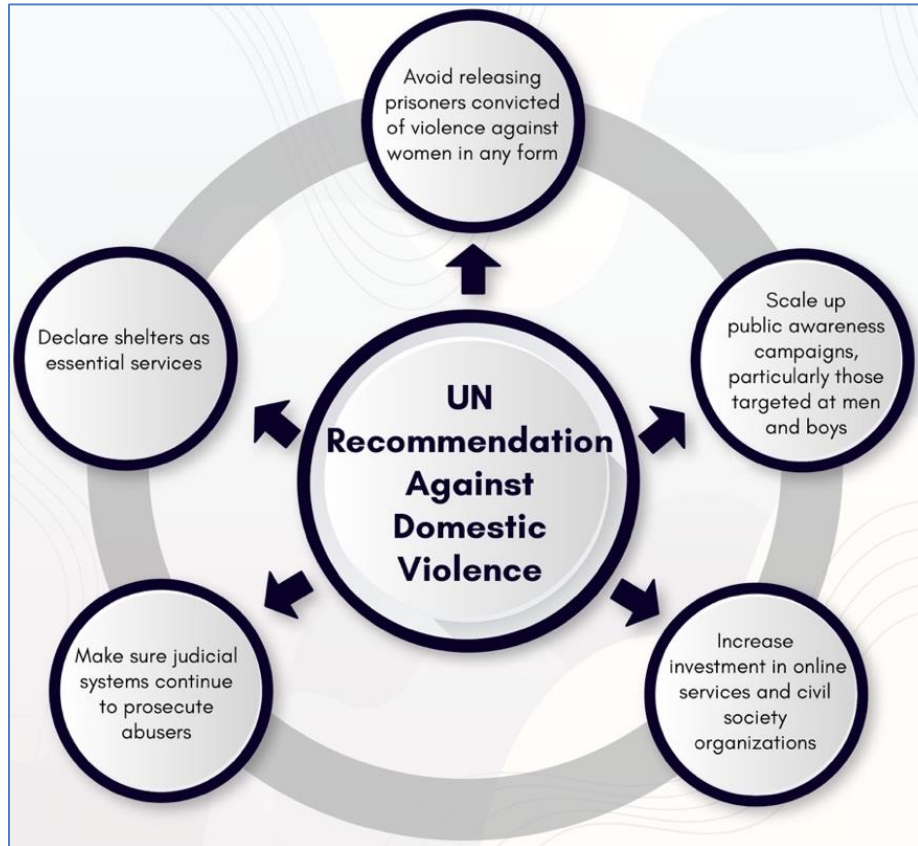
Recently, **UN Women** has urged member-states to include prevention of violence against women in their action plans on COVID-19, calling the rise in gender-based violence a **“shadow pandemic”**.

More in News

- According to the **National Commission for Women (NCW)**, there was a **46% rise** in complaints of crimes against women in the first eight months of 2021 over the corresponding period of last year.
 - Over half of these were from Uttar Pradesh.
- However, even before the global spread of the new coronavirus, statistics showed that a **third of women around the world experienced some form of violence in their lives**

How COVID-2019, is deepening the domestic violence scenario?

- **One in four countries have no laws specifically protecting women from domestic violence.**
- Healthcare providers and police are overwhelmed, and understaffed, local support groups are paralyzed or short of funds and **domestic violence shelters are also closed** as well as full.
- These limitations **“fuel impunity for the perpetrators”**, as in many countries the law is not on women’s side;
- As the lockdowns **impose stricter control on one’s mobility**, which put women in abusive relationships at extremely high risk of damage from **physical, sexual and emotional abuse**.



Recent measures taken by the Government

- The MoW&CD has instructed **to ensure that One Stop Centres**, which provide legal and psycho-social help with NIMHANS, **to survivors of gender-based violence, and link with local medical teams, police and the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)** so that their services are not impacted due to restrictions on movement.
- The **National Commission for Women** has also recently launched a **WhatsApp number making it easier for women to ask for help**, alongside a helpline and email option.
- NGOs like **Stree Mukti Sanghatan** are helping women via **free counselling** and use the online facility for reporting the crime.
- **State’s Initiatives:**
 - The Uttar Pradesh police launched an initiative **“Suppress corona, not your voice”** to reach out to the battered women through a helpline number.
 - A **community radio program** in Uttar Pradesh, for raising awareness about violence against women, **“Bell Bajao!” (Ring the Bell) campaign**, calls on men and boys to take a stand against domestic violence, **“Mpower 101” is a newly launched helpline in Mumbai to report domestic abuse.**

There are mainly three laws in India that deal directly with domestic violence:

- **The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005:**
 - It enshrines principles of the **Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**, which India ratified in 1993.
 - The Act **expanded the definition of domestic violence** to include not just physical, but also verbal, emotional, sexual and economic violence.

- The law is **broad in its definition**— “domestic relationship” includes married women, mothers, daughters and sisters.
- This law not only protects women who are married but **also protects women in live-in relationships**, as well as family members including mothers, grandmothers, etc.
- Under this law, **women can seek protection against domestic violence**, financial compensation and they can get maintenance from their abuser in case they are living apart.
- **The Dowry Prohibition Act:** Under this law, if someone takes, gives or even demands dowry, they can be imprisoned for six months or they can be fined up to Rs 5,000.
- **Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code:** This is a criminal law, which applies to husbands or relatives of husbands who are cruel to women.

1.1.2. BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO SCHEME

Why in News?

The Ministry of Women and Child Development recently published progress and achievements of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme.

About BBBP Scheme

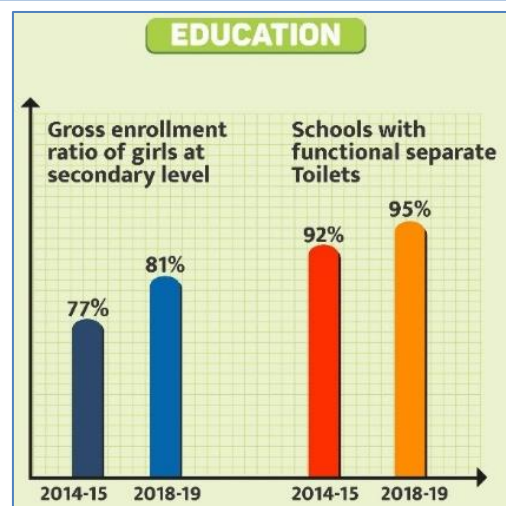
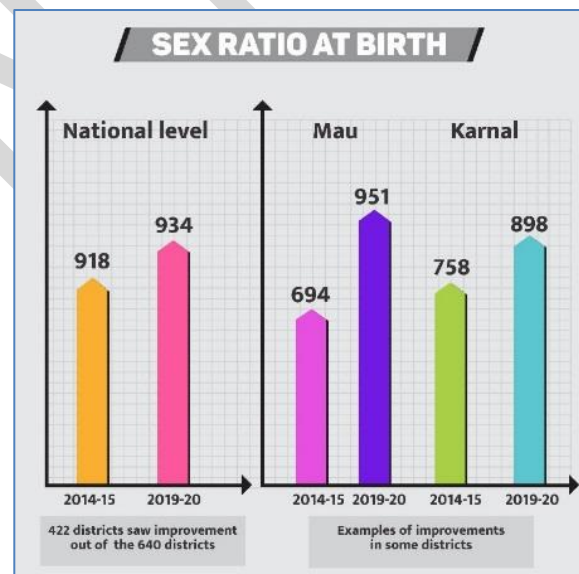
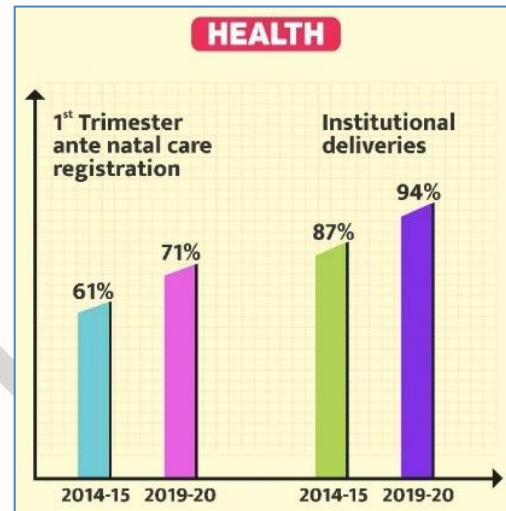
- It was launched in 2015 at Panipat, Haryana **to address the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues** of empowerment of women on a life-cycle continuum.
- It is a **tri-ministerial convergent effort** of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Education.
- **Objectives of the Scheme**
 - Prevent gender biased sex selective elimination.
 - Ensure survival & protection of the girl child.
 - Ensuring education and participation of the girl child through coordinated and convergent efforts.
- **Major components**
 - Advocacy and Media Communication Campaign.
 - Multi-Sectoral interventions in selected 405 districts.

Achievements of BBBP Scheme

- **Improvement in Sex Ratio at Birth, Health and Education** (refer infographics).
- **Attitudinal change:** By successfully engaging with communities through use of BBBP logo in popular Indian festivals i.e. Lohri, KalashYatra; felicitation of mothers and girl child at community level; celebration of Beti Janmotsav in each district.

Issues that remain

- **Underutilization of funds:** States have utilised **just 45%** of the funds allocated under the BBBP scheme in the last five years (2015-16 to 2019-20).
- **Lack of proper monitoring:** For example, Task Force meetings under the scheme do not take place frequently and monthly reports or statements of expenditure from districts are often not submitted timely.
- **High dropout rates:** The average dropout rate of girls was **17.3% at the secondary education level** and **4.74% at the elementary level** in 2018-19. Also, caste-based discrimination thrives to push Dalit and Adivasi children, especially girls, out of school.



- **Unbalanced expenditure patterns:** About 47% (on average) of the expenditure is allocated for media campaigns. Only a small proportion, i.e. about 5% each, is allocated for education and health-related interventions.

Way Forward

- Increase planned **expenditure** allocation for **education and health** related interventions.
- Use of **digital technology** for monitoring and documentation to **enhance transparency** and reduce scope for data manipulation.
- Stricter enforcement of the policy guidelines, **improve the monitoring mechanisms and incentivize state governments to utilize funds effectively.**
- **Private sector entities**, such as local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) should be on-boarded as **long-term partners** for the execution of community outreach activities.

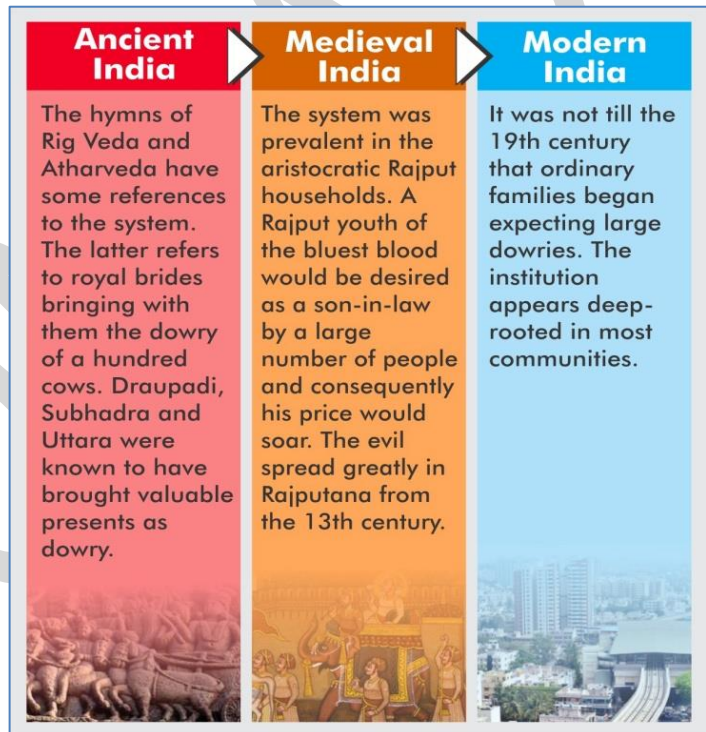
1.1.3. DOWRY SYSTEM IN INDIA

Why in news?

Public servants in Uttar Pradesh will have to declare that they have received no dowry when they were married, the department of women’s welfare said in a recent circular.

About dowry

- **Dowry is defined in the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961** (refer the infographics) as "any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly –
 - by one party to a marriage to the other party to the marriage.
 - by the parents of either party to the marriage or by any other person, to either party to the marriage or to any other person, at or before or after the marriage as consideration for the marriage of the said parties.
- The legal definition **does not include the dower or mahr** in the case of persons to whom the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) applies. Also, **parents of the girl can give gifts on her marriage, as Stridhan**, to enable her to meet her financial needs in case of an emergency.
- The opposite custom is called dower or bride-price in which payment in cash or kind is paid from the bridegroom's side to the bride's parents. Some tribal communities in India **like Yanadis of Andhra and Baria, Pagi, Damor of Gujarat customarily pay bride-price.**



Reasons for persistent rise in dowry across various communities in India

- **Social issues**
 - **Subordination of women:** Subordination of women has stemmed from the attitude of servility of the bride’s side and superiority of the groom’s side. Such hierarchical relationship between both the parties reinforces the positive attitude for dowry in the society.
 - **Penetration from upper caste to lower caste:** Some have speculated that a rise in the prevalence of dowry among upper, more privileged castes has been emulated by those in traditionally lower castes.
 - **Marriage squeeze:** Marriages in India occur almost entirely within finely delineated sub-castes, or jatis. This creates a relative scarcity of grooms in a particular caste, leading to dowry related demands.
- **Legal issues**
 - **Ineffective implementation of law:** In spite of the rapid growth of the practice, there are practically no cases reported under the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961.

- **Rights of women in ancestral property:** Traditionally women are not given any share in their ancestral property despite law being in force. Dowry is a way women could get some financial help from their parents.
- **Education of grooms:** When households decide to choose a groom, they are looking at the prospects for future income and stability. Thus, higher dowries are paid/demanded for grooms with more education and income.

Way ahead

- **Social mobilization:** Both accepting and giving dowry should be made a social stigma. Famous personalities should be persuaded to desist lavish weddings and to endorse the movement against dowry.
- **Government intervention:** The larger context for the practice of dowry is the poor presence of women in the workforce, and their consequent lack of financial independence. Women should be supported to take up jobs and have independent incomes.
- **Emulating best practices:** Punjab has a law to investigate all suicides and accidental deaths of young married women (based on the premise that there is a direct correlation between such incidents and the dowry). Other states should also take similar steps to curb the menace of dowry.
- **Legal**
 - **Outlawing extravagant weddings** because such weddings have become a proxy of dowry.
 - **Strengthening the existing laws against dowry and domestic violence** as short-term measures.
 - **Ensuring that girl child gets her share in the ancestral property** without any discrimination.
 - **Dowry** should not only include cash or gifts demanded or given to the bridegroom and his family, but also the **expenditure over and above a predetermined ceiling**, incurred in making the arrangements for the marriage.

DOWRY PROHIBITION ACT, 1961

Dowry is considered a cognizable offence for the purpose of investigation.

Every offence under this Act is non-bailable and non-compoundable.

Burden of proof is on the accused.

Makes the agreement for giving or taking dowry void.

Dowry Prohibition Officers could be established by the State Government.

Punishment with imprisonment or fine or both for:

- > Giving or taking or abetting the giving or taking of dowry
- > Demanding dowry
- > Advertisement related to dowry

Conclusion

Discrimination against women pervades all aspects of life. States should look at gender-disaggregated data across the life cycle – birth, early childhood, education, nutrition, livelihood, access to healthcare, etc. – to address gender inequality. Teachers and textbooks mould beliefs and values. Therefore, school kids should be systematically sensitized on the core value of gender equality. Larger public action needs to be directed at improving women's status at an overall level.

1.1.3.1. MINIMUM AGE FOR GIRLS' MARRIAGE

Why in News?

The Prime Minister said that the government will soon decide on revising the minimum age of marriage for women.

Background

- Government, in June 2020, **set up a Task Force (headed by Jaya Jaitly)** to examine matters pertaining to
 - age of motherhood,
 - imperatives of lowering MMR,
 - improvement of nutritional levels and related issues

Argument in favor of increasing legal age for marriage

- **Education:** Those who marry later are more likely than others to have a higher secondary or college education and take on skilling opportunities.
- **Personality development:** Early marriage constrains evolving physical, emotional, and personal maturity required to safely transition to adulthood.

- **Reproductive health:** Early marriage denies girls the right to the highest attainable standard of general, sexual, and reproductive health.
- **Maternal & Child health:** Maternal mortality, infant mortality and nutrition levels of children are dependent on age of mother.
- **Economic participation:** Marriage at a young age means not even a quarter of women in India get into the labor force despite accounting for almost half of the 1.3 billion population.
- **Eliminating the gender gap in the legal age at marriage:** Different age for marriage (21 for male and 18 for female) conditions the underlying social norm which expects women to be younger than men at the time of marriage.

Issues with increasing legal age for marriage

- **Not a solution of Child marriage:** Because such marriages are more of social and economic issue.
- **Sexual autonomy of women:** In India, mostly, women are not allowed to enter into premarital sexual relationships. Thus, increasing the age of marriage would also hamper their sexual autonomy.
- **Significant decadal improvement in median age of marriage:** Because people are now marrying later than ever before.
- **Safest age for pregnancy:** Mortality experienced by the cohort aged 20 years to 24 years (roughly those marrying at ages 18 years and higher) is by far the lowest of all age groups.

Way ahead

Noting the law's patriarchal underpinnings, the 18th Law Commission report (2008) asked for **uniformity in the age of marriage at 18 years for both men and women** and lowering the age of consent to 16 years, a recommendation also of the Justice Verma Committee.

1.1.3.2. SPECIAL MARRIAGE ACT (SMA)

Why in News?

Recently, Centre has objected to a petition seeking to discontinue with the provision of inviting objection from public while applying for marriage registration under the Special Marriage Act (SMA).

About Special Marriage Act (SMA)

- The SMA was **meant to be a legislation to govern marriages that could not be solemnised according to religious customs** – which essentially meant inter-faith or inter-caste marriages.
 - Unlike personal laws, the Special Marriage Act's applicability extends to all Indian citizens regardless of their religion.
- It can also be **used by couples from the same community who don't want their marriage (and ancillary issues like divorce) governed by relevant personal laws** – a marriage performed in accordance with religious rites can also be registered under the SMA afterward.
- Special Marriage Act, 1954 is also applicable in cases where an Indian marries a foreigner in India.
- Section 4 of the SMA specifies the following conditions for a couple to get married under the SMA:
 - Neither of them has a living spouse;
 - At the time of the marriage **bridegroom must be at least 21 and bride at least 18 years of age.**
 - Both parties **should be mentally sane** to be **able to decide for themselves** at time of marriage.
 - They should **not be related to themselves through blood relationships.**
- All marriages done under the SMA **requires publication of the names of the couple for inviting objections from public for 30 days.**

Classification of marriage laws on a religious basis

- **Hindu marriage laws:** The matrimony of a Hindu couple is governed by the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 which deals with the registration of the marriage (after its solemnization) of a man and woman belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, or Jain community or having proselytize themselves to either of these religions.
- **Muslim marriage laws:** There is no codified law for governing Muslim marriages in India. The main difference that lies between Hindu and Islamic perception about marriages is that the former believes the institution to be a sacrament while the latter believes that it a civil contract (nikahnama) between a Muslim man and woman.
- **Matrimonial Rights for LGBTQIA+:** In an affidavit filed in response to petitions seeking to recognize same sex marriage recently, the Central government said, "Despite the decriminalisation of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the petitioners cannot claim a fundamental right for same-sex marriage being recognised under the laws of the country".

Issues with SMA

- **30-Day Objection Period:** Mandatory 30 days waiting period for objections from the public affords sufficient time to parents as well as vigilante groups to ensure that a marriage does not take place.
- **Violation of right to equality:** 30-Day Objection Period clause is absent if one plans to marry under personal law, thus the existence of it under the Special Marriage Act is discriminatory and violates the right to equality (Article 14).
- **Complex procedure:** Marriage under the Special Marriage Act requires an extra witness – three, instead of two in the case of marriage registration under personal laws. This extra responsibility **might make one think twice before agreeing to be a witness, adding an extra layer of complexity in the overall process.**
- **Violations of a couple's privacy:** publication of 30 days' notice is an invasion of couple's privacy and caused unnecessary social pressure/interference in their free choice with regard to their marriage.

Supreme Court's judgements on Right to Marry

- Right to marry is **not expressly recognized either as a fundamental or constitutional right** under the Indian Constitution. Though marriage is regulated through various statutory enactments, its recognition as a fundamental right has only developed through judicial decisions of India's Supreme Court.
- **Lata Singh v. State of UP (2006):** The Supreme Court held that the petitioner was **entitled to marry whoever she wanted** and that **no law bars on an inter-caste marriage.**
- **Shakti Vahini vs. Union of India (2018):** Supreme Court held that the **right of a person's choice to marry whomever they please** is in an **inherent part of individual dignity and intrinsic to Article 21.**
 - It also declared 'khap panchayats' as 'illegal' and that **no assembly can interfere in marriage.**

Way forward

Recently in a judgment supreme court said that educated younger boys and girls are choosing their life partners, which, in turn, is a departure from the earlier norms of society where caste and community play a major role. Possibly, this is the way forward where caste and community tensions will reduce by such intermarriages.

By making the implementation of the Special Marriage Act so complex, the law is further complicating the lives of young people who have decided to choose their own partners. State must evolve a mechanism to verify the credibility of person in marriage and publication of the notice under the Special Marriage Act, 1954 would not be violative of their fundamental rights.


Article 16 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- **Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race/nationality/religion, have the right to marry** and to found a family.
- They are **entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.**
- Marriage shall be entered into **only with the free and full consent** of the **intending spouses.**
- The **family** is the **natural and fundamental group unit of society** and is **entitled to protection by society and the State.**

“You are as strong as your Foundation”

FOUNDATION COURSE GENERAL STUDIES

PRELIMS CUM MAINS 2022 & 2023



Approach is to build fundamental concepts and analytical ability in students to enable them to answer questions of Preliminary as well as Mains examination

- Includes comprehensive coverage of all the topics for all the four papers of GS Mains, GS Prelims & Essay
- Access to LIVE as well as Recorded Classes on your personal student platform
- Includes All India GS Mains, GS Prelims, CSAT & Essay Test Series
- Our Comprehensive Current Affairs classes of PT 365 and Mains 365 of year 2022

ONLINE Students

NOTE - Students can watch LIVE video classes of our COURSE on their ONLINE PLATFORM at their homes. The students can ask their doubts and subject queries during the class through LIVE Chat Option. They can also note down their doubts & questions and convey to our classroom mentor at Delhi center and we will respond to the queries through phone/mail.

Live - online / Offline Classes

GS FOUNDATION COURSE 2023

DELHI: 25 NOV, 9 AM | 10 DEC, 9 AM | 11 JAN, 5 PM | LUCKNOW: 11 Jan | CHANDIGARH: 18 Jan

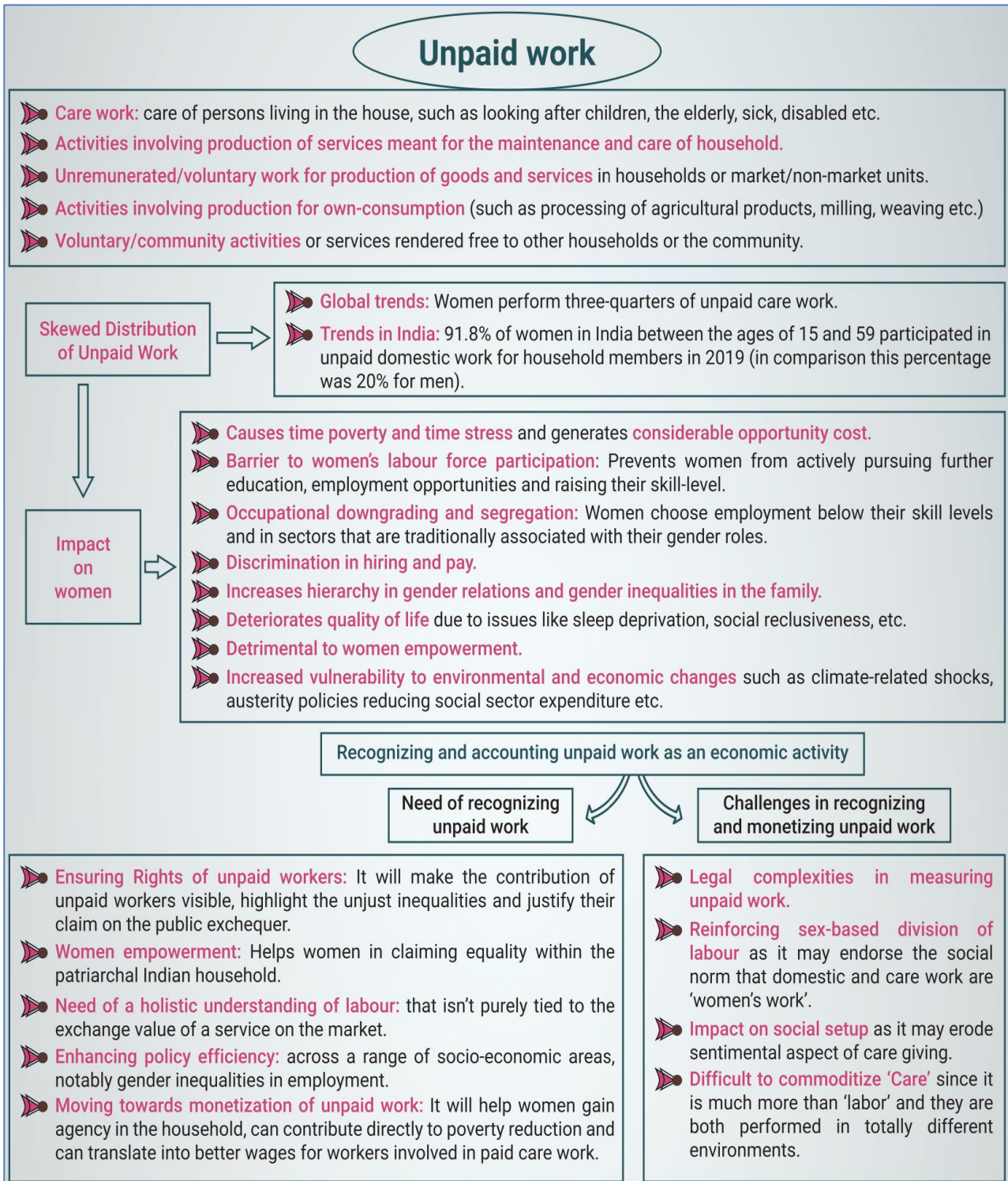
13 OCT | DELHI

8 OCT | AHMEDABAD | HYDERABAD

18 OCT | PUNE

6 OCT | JAIPUR

1.1.4. UNPAID WORK



1.1.5. FEMINIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

The Periodic Labour Force Survey or PLFS (2019-2020) data shows a surge in female labour force participation rate (LFPR) in agriculture which reflects feminization of agriculture.

About More on news

- **Feminisation of agriculture:** It refers to a **disproportionate concentration of women in agriculture**. For example, according to the recent PLFS, almost the entire rise in the workforce was accommodated by agriculture which increased to 45.6% (2019-20) from 42.5% (2018-19). Also, the female LFPR rose by 5.5% (from 2018-19), much of this is driven by the increased LFPR of rural women.

Feminisation in agriculture is good	Feminisation in agriculture is bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings women into the public sphere and allows them to socialize. • Make their labour visible and many a time their labour may be accounted for. • Builds women's skills and confidence. • Opportunity to organise and enhance their bargaining power. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may have a negative impact on agricultural output as women face more difficulties in use of technology, credit, and market information. • Women have been confined to traditional, low paying roles • When women put in extra hours on farms in peak seasons of sowing, transplanting, and harvesting, it may impact their food preparation time and reduce nutrient intake, a study finds.

Factors driving the feminization in agriculture

- **Migration of men to non-farm sectors:** They do so by moving to urban areas taking up non-farm work as casual labourers, for earning better wages, in construction, brick kilns, mills, etc. in villages.
- **Patriarchal social norms:** Women have less mobility, and they are not allowed to join non-agricultural works like brick kilns. Certain labour-intensive farm works like transplantation and winnowing are typified as women's work.
- **Preference to female labour:** Women are preferred for labour intensive works as they are thought to be docile and hardworking, accept low-paid irregular work, and are easy to hire and fire.

Challenges faced by women in agriculture sector

- **No formal recognition as farmers:** Thus, women in agriculture cannot avail of government schemes meant for farmers.
- **Differentiated access to productive resources:** Only 14% of the operational holdings in agriculture is owned by women (Agri Census 2015-16). Such lack of collateral adversely impacts ability to access institutional credit, subsidies etc.
- **Small land holding hindering the economies of scale:** Close to 90% of women-owned landholdings is of small and marginal landholdings (Agri-census 2015-16).
- **Wage disparity:** Wages received by women were, on an average, **35.8% lower** than wages received by men for the period between 1998-2015 (Labor Bureau).
- **No representation in policy making:** Thus, women's problems are nearly unrepresented in the popular policy debates.

Ways for empowering women in the field of agriculture

- **Ownership of land:** To enable their access to govt schemes, credit, etc.
- **Women centric facilities:** For example, a focus on innovating farm machines that are better suited to female use will be rewarding.
- **Female representation on the decision-making forums:** This will eventually help in bridging wage gaps and current deficit in women sensitive policy making.
- **Enhance gender budgeting:** In 2020-21, only 5% of the total budget was sensitive to gender neutral outcomes and focused specifically on women-centric schemes.
- **Role of civil society:** For organising agrarian women into collectives, educating them about their rights, giving them sustainable livelihood training, etc. For example, Deccan Development Society in Telangana, or Musahar Manch Uttar Pradesh.

Steps taken to empower women in Agriculture

- **Earmarking at least 30% of the budget allocation for women beneficiaries** in all ongoing schemes/ programmes and development activities.
- **Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)**, a subcomponent of the Deendayal Antodaya Yojana-NRLM (DAY-NRLM) seeks to **improve the present status of women in Agriculture**.
- **Focusing on women self-help group (SHG)** to connect them to micro-credit and to provide information and ensuring their representation in different decision-making bodies.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has declared 15th October of every year as **Women Farmer's Day**.

1.1.6. STEM CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN INDIA

Why in news?

Recently, The Department of Science & Technology (DST) and IBM India announced two collaborations to promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) learning among students.

More about news

- These collaborations involve:



- **‘Vigyan Jyoti’ program:** Under the DST, this programme aims to inspire girls from grades 9 to 12 to pursue STEM in their higher education.
- **‘Engage With Science’:** It is a technology-driven interactivity platform for connecting the high school students to the higher education institutions to be developed by the Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous organisation of DST.
- **Women tech experts** working at IBM India will interact and **be role models for inspiring girl students** to plan for a career in STEM under the program.

Status of STEM career opportunities for women in India?

- In India, **40% of STEM graduates are women** as compared to 35% of the global average.
- However, **only 14% of researchers in India are women** as compared to 30% of the global average.

Why India has more women graduates in STEM yet fewer women researchers?

- **Patriarchal culture:** Girls are often made to believe that they are not smart enough for STEM or that boys and men have natural affinity for the field (UN).
- **Pursuing research is difficult:** Women face more hurdles than men in building a motivated team and attracting consistent funding.
- **Attending research conferences is difficult:** Owing to households’ responsibilities, and **administrative hassles** at the workplace.
- **Repercussions of perceived “women-friendly” measure:** In some institutes, to ensure their safety, women are advised to work only during official hours, while men can access labs any time.
- **Gender pay gap:** Women in the field of STEM are known to be paid less for their research work compared to men.

Way ahead

- **Safe travel:** Prioritising young families for on-campus housing by revamping the current seniority-based system and workplace transport facility in cities could aid the safety of women.
- **Encouraging participation in conferences:** This can be accomplished by supporting and rewarding organisers who ensure Women’s participation in conferences.
- **Paternity leave:** The childcare leave should be extended to male parent also so as to prevent women from bearing the brunt of career setbacks due to childbirth
- Public funding of **crèche facilities at the workplace.**

Conclusion

Our future will be marked by scientific and technological progress, which can only be achieved when women and girls are creators, owners, and leaders of science, technology and innovation. **Bridging the gender gap in STEM is vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals** and for creating infrastructure, services and solutions that work for all people.

1.1.7. WOMEN AND TRADE: THE ROLE OF TRADE IN PROMOTING WOMEN’S EQUALITY

Why in news?

The World Bank Group and the World Trade Organization (WTO) jointly published a report titled **“Women and Trade: The Role of Trade in Promoting Women’s Equality”**.

About the report

- This report marks the first major effort to **quantify how women are affected by trade** through the use of a new gender-disaggregated labor dataset.
- This analysis helps governments understand **how trade policies will affect women and men differently.**

Role of trade in promoting women’s equality

- **Trade creates better jobs for women:** Countries that are more open to trade have higher levels of gender equality.
- **Bypassing trade barriers:** Digital technology creates opportunities for women to bypass traditional trade barriers (finance, access to information, etc.).
- **Bridges the gender gap:** Trade increases women’s wages and increases economic equality. It decreases social inequality and expands women's access to skills and education.

- **Enhanced employment opportunities:** In developing countries, women make up 33% of the workforce of exporting firms compared with just 24% of non-exporting firms.
- **Participation in Services sectors:** In developing countries, the proportion of women in the service sector jumped to 38% in 2017 from 25% in 1991.
- **Competitiveness of the economy:** Countries that do not allow women to fully participate in the economy are less competitive internationally.

Constraints affecting women in their trade related roles

- **Poor job conditions:** 80% of women globally work mainly in low- to medium-skill occupations. Also, they hold fewer jobs, and are paid less.
- **Discriminatory trade policies:** Resulting in lower levels of employment and higher prices for consumer goods.
- **Vulnerability to global shocks:** Women are more vulnerable to global shock to the economy as they are specifically active apparel, tourism, hospitality and related sectors.
- **Social, legal and financial barriers:** These challenges are magnified by a lack of sex-disaggregated data.

Way ahead

- **Enhance cross-border trade:** By creating predictable and efficient trade policies which can be a catalyst for women traders.
- **Improving access to trade finance:** To empower women-owned and women-managed firms.
- **Building women's capacity:** For example, proper compensation policy could protect women from the heat of automation.
- **Evaluations of international assistance:** Including Aid for Trade with a gender component, can provide feedback on the kinds of interventions that are most effective in promoting gender equality in trade.
- **Increasing access to sex-disaggregated data:** It will help in identification of priority sectors, skills, and markets in which women have a comparative advantage over men.



फाउंडेशन कोर्स सामान्य अध्ययन
प्रारंभिक एवं मुख्य परीक्षा 2022 & 2023

इनोवेटिव क्लासरूम प्रोग्राम

- प्रारंभिक परीक्षा, मुख्य परीक्षा और निबंध के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सभी टॉपिक को विस्तृत कवरेज
- मौलिक अवधारणाओं की समझ के विकास एवं विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता निर्माण पर विशेष ध्यान
- एनीमेशन, पॉवर प्वाइंट, वीडियो जैसी तकनीकी सुविधाओं का प्रयोग
- अंतर - विषयक समझ विकसित करने का प्रयास
- योजनाबद्ध तैयारी हेतु करंट ओरिएंटेड अप्रोच
- नियमित क्लास टेस्ट एवं व्यक्तिगत मूल्यांकन
- सीसेट कक्षाएं
- PT 365 कक्षाएं
- MAINS 365 कक्षाएं
- PT टेस्ट सीरीज
- मुख्य परीक्षा टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध टेस्ट सीरीज
- सीसेट टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध लेखन - शैली की कक्षाएं
- करंट अफेयर्स मैगजीन

Scan the QR CODE to download VISION IAS app

DELHI: 28 सितंबर 1 PM

DELHI: 2023 फाउंडेशन कोर्स: 15 DECEMBER **LUCKNOW : 11 January**

लाइव/ऑनलाइन कक्षाएं भी उपलब्ध

1.2. ISSUES RELATED TO CHILDREN

CHILD ISSUES AT- A- GLANCE

Health & nutrition

Children under 5 who are Stunted: 23.4%, Underweight: 19.7%, Overweight: 4% (NFHS-5)



Challenges

- » Poor child feeding practices,
- » Inadequate access to WASH
- » Poor nutrition among women,
- » weak implementation of schemes, food wastage, etc.



Initiatives

- » POSHAN Abhiyaan
- » Mid-day meals in primary and upper primary school
- » Anemia Mukht Bharat strategy
- » Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme



Way forward

- » Identification of early signs of malnourishment POSHAN-plus strategy
- » Capacity building
- » Behavioural changes
- » Residential care for food security of the most vulnerable children

Education

More than 90% are enrolled in some institution in every age group but only 16% of children in Class 1 can read text at the prescribed level and only 41% could recognise two-digit numbers (ASER, 2019).



Challenges

- » India spends around **3% of its GDP** on education.
- » Single educator schools and **teachers' absentees**
- » **Lack of facilities** like drinking water and study materials.
- » **Gender discrimination.**



Initiatives

- » New Education Policy (NEP), 2020
- » Vidya Pravesh, NISHTHA 2.0
- » SAFAL (Structured Assessment For Analyzing Learning Levels)
- » National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR)



Way forward

- » Effective implementation of NEP, 2020
- » Setting the right priorities
- » adopting effective teaching-learning processes
- » Expand and strengthen the existing network of anganwadi centres

CHILD ISSUES AT- A- GLANCE

Child marriage

India has 1/3rd of the global child bride. Nearly 16% adolescent girls aged 15-19 are currently married.



Challenges

- » Cultural like Akha Teej in Rajasthan
- » Poverty, patriarchal attitudes, skewed sex ratio
- » Ineffective implementation of law



Initiatives

- » Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
- » UJJAWALA scheme
- » Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Yojana
- » Kanyashree Prakalpa scheme of the West Bengal government



Way forward

- » Compulsory registration of marriages
- » Increasing girl's access to schooling and higher education
- » Ensuring safety and security of girls
- » IEC

Adoption

The number of Indian adults registered with CARA has increased yet the number of adoptions has steadily dipped.



Challenges

- » Stigma surrounding adoption
- » Discriminatory adoption rules
- » Pan India adoption platform CARINGS
- » Administrative challenges



Initiatives

- » Ratification of the UNCRC, in 1992, Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993 establishes
- » Child Protection Services scheme
- » 2021 Amendment to the JJ Act, 2015



Way forward

- » Give choices to prospective parents
- » Counselling prospective parent
- » Mandatory registration of Child Care Centres
- » Special assistance to families in rural areas
- » Nationwide IEC campaign

CHILD ISSUES AT- A- GLANCE

Child labour

There are 10.1 million working children between age of 5-14 years in India (Census 2011)



Challenges

- » Lack of reliable data on child labour
- » Informal economy and illegal economic activities
- » **Lax implementation of law and abuse of legal provisions**
- » A means of survival for many children
- » Lack of political will



Initiatives

- » ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Convention 138 on the Minimum Age of Employment.
- » Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act 2016
- » National Child Labour Project Scheme and the PENCIL Portal



Way forward

- » Collect the data that make child labour visible.
- » Improve law enforcement machinery
- » Integrated system on poverty, education etc.
- » Sensitize the community

POCSO Act

There are 10.1 million working children between age of 5-14 years in India (Census 2011)



Challenges

- » **Proving the age of the child**
- » **Loopholes in the criminal justice system**
- » **Lack of specialized public prosecutor**
- » **Lack of accountability in Commissions for the Protection of Child Rights**



Initiatives

- In 2019 the Act was amended to make it stricter by
- » Increasing punishment for certain assaults
 - » Widening the scope of aggravated penetrative sexual assault
 - » Defining child pornography



Way forward

- » Nationwide assessment of the impact POCSO Act
- » Overhaul of the criminal justice delivery system
- » Awareness among children and parents

1.2.1. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES (POCSO) ACT, 2012

Why in news?

Recently, the single-judge bench of the Bombay High Court (HC) set aside charges of sexual assault under POCSO Act against a man accused of molesting a 12-year-old girl child.

More about the news

- The Bombay HC absolved an accused from the charges under POCSO Act and instead **chose to apply Section 354 of the IPC.**
- The High Court judge held that mere groping **without “skin-to-skin contact” cannot be termed as sexual assault under the POCSO Act.**
- The phrase **“skin-to-skin contact” is not mentioned under the POCSO Act.**
- The **Supreme Court later stayed the order** as it was “likely to set a dangerous precedent”.

About POCSO Act, 2012

- It is a comprehensive law for the **protection of children** (under the age of 18) **from the offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography.**
- It incorporates **child-friendly mechanisms at every stage of the judicial process** which include reporting, recording of evidence, investigation and speedy trial of offences **through designated Special Courts.**
- It also mandates that the **investigation in the cases is to be completed in two months and trial in 6 months.** For this purpose, **Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs)** are established.
- It also **punishes criminals who are in positions of trust of authority** like public servants, staff of educational institutions, police etc.
- **In 2019 the Act was amended** to make it stricter by
 - **Increasing the minimum punishment** for certain assaults
 - **Widening the scope of aggravated penetrative sexual assault**
 - **Defining child pornography**

Section 354 IPC vs. POCSO Act, 2012

Specifics	Section 354 IPC	POCSO
Age of the victim	Punishment for the offence irrespective of age of the victim	For the protection of children only
Gender of the victim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender neutral
Definition of sexual assault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition is generic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Act for the first time, defines “penetrative sexual assault”, “sexual assault” and “sexual harassment”.
Burden of proof	Lies on the prosecution. The accused in ‘deemed to be innocent until proven guilty’	Lies on the accused. The accused is ‘deemed to be guilty until proven innocent’
Punishment	Minimum 1 year this may extend to five years along with a fine.	Minimum 3 Years this may extend to 5 years, in addition to a fine.

Impact of POCSO

Law has **not been able to produce expected deterrence. Proportion of child victim in rape cases has increased.** Higher numbers of bails are granted for crimes committed under POCSO vis-à-vis other crimes. **Conviction rate** in POCSO cases in 2016 (the latest year for which data is available) was **only 28.2%. 89% of the cases of child sexual abuse were awaiting justice at the end of 2019.**

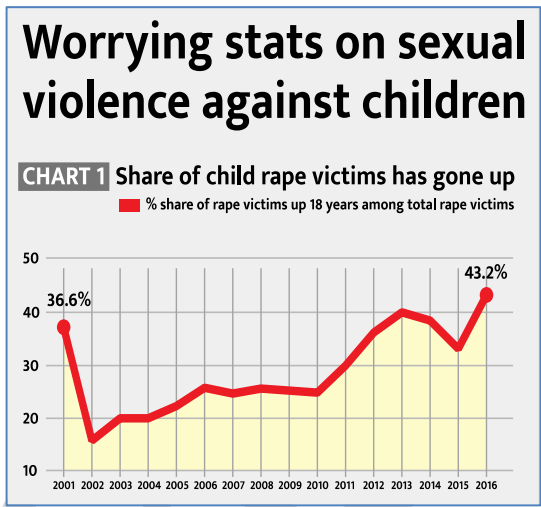
Challenges in implementing POCSO Act

- **Proving the age of the child:** The POCSO Act is silent on what documents are to be considered for determining the age of the child victim.
- **Police system:** Police fall under the jurisdiction of the states. It suffers from various issues like shortage of human resource (including skilled human resource), politicization, overburdened with work.
- **Forensic samples:** Due to poor training they may not collect forensic samples with due diligence. Further, such samples often end up getting contaminated, or putrefied due to improper storage.
- **Overburdened judiciary:** At present, special courts set up under the law deal with other kinds of criminal and civil cases as well. Moreover, frequent adjournments reduce the chances of the victim being able to recollect the facts of the incident accurately.

- **Public Prosecutor:** Generally, defense lawyers in POCSO cases are specialised, but the same did not hold true for the public prosecutors, leading to a "mismatch".
- **Lack of accountability in National and State Commissions for the Protection of Child Rights:** They are required to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Act in addition to generating public awareness. However, their functioning and evaluation procedure is **not open to public scrutiny**.

Way ahead

- **Nationwide assessment of the impact of POCSO Act:** This would pave the way for bringing the required changes in the system.
- **Police reform:** Police is the first interface between the victim and the judiciary. Therefore, effective functioning and sensitivity in police is a prerequisite in dealing with cases of Child sex abuse.
- **Overhaul of the criminal justice delivery system:** The courts set up under this law must exclusively deal with child sexual abuse matters. Also, there is a need for audit of funds requirement, practices and procedures of the specialised courts, set up under this law. There is a need for **specialization and sensitisation of the judges, prosecutors and police officers** who deal with such cases. **Improve the compensation** and set up a support system as many victims have to forego their education due to several reasons.
- **Awareness:** Awareness among children and parents need to be enhanced.



Conclusion

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 (ratified by India in 1992) requires sexual exploitation and sexual abuse to be addressed as heinous crimes. Thus, POCSO is a much-needed law. The adjudication process for the same should be made more transparent. Roles of police in such offences must be prompt. Additionally, to overcome and eradicate this issue from the grassroots, the collective consciousness among the masses should be pure.

1.2.2. JUVENILE JUSTICE (CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN) AMENDMENT ACT, 2021

Why in news?

Parliament passed Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2021, which seeks to amend the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.

Brief Background

- A juvenile is a **person less than 18 years** of age.
- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 addresses **children in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection**.
 - It provided for the **trial of juveniles in conflict with law in the age group of 16-18 years as adults in certain cases**.
 - It fulfils India's commitment as a signatory to the **United Nations Convention on the rights of the child, the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Inter-country Adoption (1993)**, and other related international instruments.
- The recent amendment has been brought based on a **report filed by the NCPCR** in 2018-19 in which the over 7,000 Child Care Institutions (or children's homes) were surveyed and **several inadequacies** prevailing in the system were highlighted.

Changes made by the Act

Specification	Related Provisions in JJ Act, 2015	Features of Act
Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of a child is final once a civil court issues an adoption order. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Magistrates (DM), including ADM, can issue adoption orders (both for intra-country and intercountry adoptions).

Appeals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be no appeal for any order made by a Child Welfare Committee (CWC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any person aggrieved by an adoption order passed by the DM may file an appeal before the Divisional Commissioner, within 30 days of such order.
Serious Offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offences committed by juveniles are categorised as: heinous offences, serious offences (to be inquired by Juvenile Justice Board), petty offences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redefines 'serious offences' to give effect to the recommendation of Supreme court in Shilpa Mittal v. State of NCT of Delhi case.
Designated Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offences punishable with imprisonment of more than seven years, will be tried in the Children's Court. Other offences will be tried by a Judicial Magistrate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All offences under the Act will be tried in the Children's Court.
Offences against children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offence punishable with imprisonment of 3-7 years will be cognizable and non-bailable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Such offences will be non-cognizable and non-bailable.
Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States must constitute one or more CWCs for each district for dealing with children in need of care and protection. Provides certain criteria for the appointment of members to CWC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stipulate certain additional criteria for appointment of CWC members. For example, it prohibits people with past record of violation of human rights or child rights or if they are convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude among others.

Concerns regarding Act

- Centralizing powers:** The Act puts entire onus of children's welfare on DMs. This may lead to **delays**, and may have other wider repercussions on child welfare.
- Overburdening DMs:** DM is already an over-burdened authority with the charge of entire district and other multifarious duties. The act adds to this burden.
- Inadequate Competency:** DM and divisional commissioners are usually are not trained or equipped to deal with these specific laws related to children. In countries such as UK, Germany, France, adoption orders are issued only by the court.
- Adverse impact on the doctrine of separation of powers:** As grievance redressal powers have been given to the executive.

Benefits of new Act

Faster adoption as the Act empowers DM and ADM to issue adoption order.

Enhanced Protection of children

Strengthen monitoring Smooth implementation

Way ahead

To further increase protection of children, following steps can be taken

- Transparency:** Proper record keeping and documentation must be carried out by all agencies to ensure transparency in various areas like finances, compliance with procedures etc.
- Sensitization of officials:** Officials need to be properly trained to sensitively and efficiently deal with children and their issues, needs, problems, concerns and safety. Vacant positions must be filled, and where required, extra staff must be employed to ensure due care and protection to children.
- Networking and Coordinating:** Linkages with external agencies and individuals who are experts in various areas of child care must be encouraged and made mandatory (where applicable).

Conclusion

The new amendment act is expected to address difficulties faced in implementation of Act in its erstwhile form by increasing power and responsibilities of DMs and providing clarity on scope of certain provisions of the Act.

1.2.3. CHILD LABOUR

Why in news?

Report titled ‘Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward’ has been released by International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

Key findings of the report

- 160 million children were in **child labour globally**, accounting for almost **1 in 10 of all children** worldwide.
- The prevalence of child labour in **rural areas is close to three times higher** than in urban areas.
- **72% of all child labour occurs within families**, primarily on family farms or in family microenterprises.
- Globally, **9 million additional children are at risk of being pushed into child labour** by the end of 2022 because of COVID 19 pandemic.
- The **agriculture sector accounts for more child labourers**, followed by services and industry.

Child labour

- **Child labour:** It is the work that **deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity**, and that is harmful to physical and mental development (ILO).
- **Worst forms of child labour:** It comprise all forms of slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and forced labour, use of children in armed conflict, pornography or other illicit or hazardous occupations.
- **Current status in India**
 - There are **10.1 million working children between the ages of 5-14 years in India** (Census 2011).
 - Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh constitute nearly 55% of total working children in India.



Factors driving prevalence of Child Labour in India

- **Informal nature of economy:** Unorganized sector accounts for 83% of the workforce which remains beyond the radar of labour regulation.
- **Prevalence of illegal economic activities:** Like rat hole mining in Meghalaya, Mica mining in Jharkhand, etc. abets child labour.
- **Abuse of legal provisions:** In India, children are allowed to work in certain conditions. This gives the employer a leeway to employ children.
- **Lack of reliable data on child labour:** The latest data on child labour is a decade old the Census 2011.
- **Lax implementation of law:** As a result, just 4,530 ended up with convictions of the 1 lakh prosecutions that resulted from 14.34 lakh inspections in 2013-18.
 - **Close to 95% of the amount in the Child Labour Rehabilitation Welfare Fund (CLRWF)** collected from those found guilty of employing children in the State over the last 10 years **is lying unutilized.**
- **Industrialist-Political-bureaucratic- nexus** also abets child labour.
- **Child labour also becomes a means of survival** for homeless or abandoned children.

Measures to be taken to eliminate the Child Labour

- **Enforcement of law:** Improve law enforcement machinery. For effective implementation of laws and regulations.

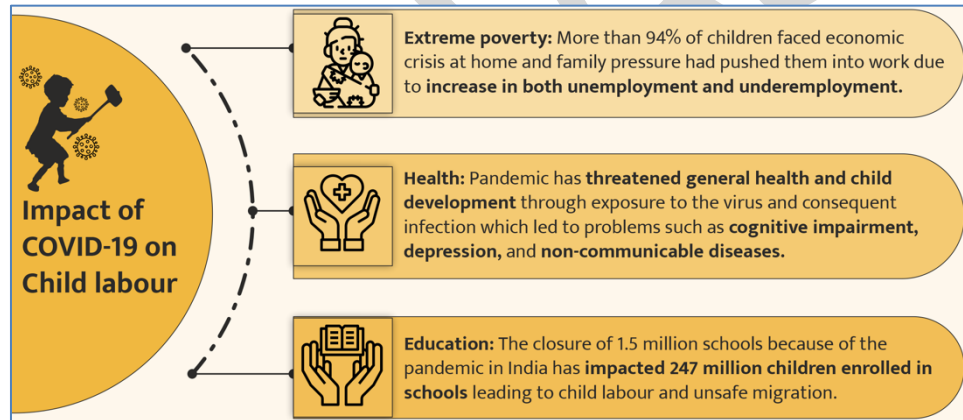
- **Reinvigorate the labour law:** All the children under 18 years should be prohibited from working.
- **Social labeling of products:** Labeling of non-involvement of child labour in making a product would help common people make informed choice about products they use.
- **Data Collection:** Collect the data that **make child labour visible**.
- **Integrated system:** Strengthen child protection, eliminate poverty and inequity, improve access to quality of education and mobilize public support for respecting children's rights.
- **Role of community:** Community at large should be sensitizing to be vigilant against the child labour.

Government steps for eradication of child labour

- **Gurupadswamy Committee, 1979:** It was formed to **study the issue of child labour and recommended a multiple policy approach** in dealing with the problems of working children.
- **India ratified ILO Convention 182** on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Convention 138 on the Minimum Age of Employment.
- **Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act 2016:** It prohibits the 'engagement of children (under 14 years) in all occupations and of adolescents (under 18 years) in hazardous occupations and processes.
- **National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme:** Special Schools/Rehabilitation Centres for the rehabilitation of child labourers are opened for **non-formal education, vocational training, supplementary nutrition** and stipend to rescued children.
- **PENCiL (Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour) Portal:** It has become a pivotal tool in rescuing and rehabilitating victims of child labour.
- **Bachpan Bachao Andolan (Save the Childhood Movement)** has helped liberate more than 85,000 children in India from exploitation through education and rehabilitation.

Conclusion

Implementation of Child rights suffers from myriads of problems. These problems need to be addressed with utmost urgency to ensure a prosperous future for the country. Also, the UN has set a target to eliminate the child labour in all its forms by 2025. Some concrete steps by India could go a long way in achieving this target.



1.2.4. CHILD ADOPTION

Why in news?

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) has clarified that children who are rendered orphaned can be adopted only by following the procedure established by law.

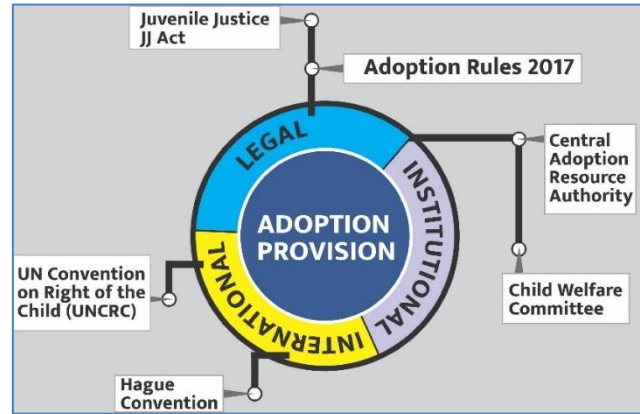
Adoption provisions in India

- When there is a **child without a family**, the **State becomes the guardian**.
- **Legal framework**
 - **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act):** It governs the whole adoption procedure in the country.
 - **Adoption Regulations 2017:** The regulation addresses the need for in-family adoptions, post-adoption support, child-centric provisions, time-limit on courts for disposing of adoption deeds, etc.
- **Institutions**
 - **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA):** It is a **statutory body** (under the **JJ Act**) under the MoWCD. It primarily deals with adoption (including inter-country adoption) of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children through its associated /recognised adoption agencies.
 - **District Child Welfare Committee (CWC):** The CWC is required to conduct at least two inspection visits per month of residential facilities for children in need of care and protection and make recommendations for improvement to the District Child Protection Unit and the State Government.
- **International Conventions**
 - **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1992:** It emphasizes social integration of child victims, without resorting to judicial proceedings.

- **Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, 1993** establishes minimum standards for inter country adoption.

Challenges in child adoption: The number of Indian adults registered with CARA has more than doubled (around 15,200 in 2017 from 7000 in 2016), yet the number of adoptions has more or less steadily dipped. Followings could be some underlying reasons for this anomaly:

- **Stigma surrounding adoption:** For many couples, adoption remains the last resort to enjoy parenthood as they have their genes, blood and lineage in their child.
- **Discriminatory adoption rules:** The rules do not allow sexual minorities to legally adopt children. Also, single men cannot adopt a girl child, limiting the pool of prospective parents.
- **Pan India adoption platform CARINGS:** The CARINGS doesn't give much choice to parents to adopt kids from the same state which could ensure cultural similarities, avoidance of long distance travelling to bring the child home, etc.
- **Administrative challenges:** Many districts lack an authorised adoption agency even though they are legally mandated. Furthermore, many childcare centres are not registered with child welfare committees (CWC). Children in these centres cannot be adopted.
- **Trafficking, illegal adoptions, and legal alternatives:** For example, Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Law of 1956 allows Hindus to give or adopt a baby privately without the involvement of an adoption agency.
- **Many parents return their adopted child:** Many parents realise that they weren't prepared and couldn't adjust with their adopted child. Additionally, many a time, children aren't counselled about what it would be like to live with a family.



Steps taken to ease the child adoption

- CARA reduced the wait period for adoption.
- Online registration portal CARINGS (Child Adoption Resource Information and Guidance System) has streamlined the process of adoption.
- **Child Protection Services (CPS) scheme:** It is a centrally sponsored scheme being implemented by the MoWCD under the umbrella **Integrated Child Development Services Scheme**. It establishes a District Child Protection Unit to identify orphan, abandoned and surrendered children in the district and get them declared legally free for adoption by the CWC.
- **The 2021 amendment Act to the JJ Act, 2015:** It empowers District Magistrates (DMs) and Additional DMs to authorise orders of adoption.

Way ahead

- **Give choices to prospective parents** to adopt a child belonging to their respective states.
- **Counselling prospective parents** to prepare them for what it is like to live with a kid, especially with an older kid.
- Also, older kids should be given for **adoption to families who live in the areas** for which they have a **sense of familiarity**.
- **Mandatory registration of Child Care Centres (CCCs):** Around 28% of the CCCs are not registered with CWC. They must be mandated to get themselves registered in a time bound manner. Failure to do so, must lead to closure of such centres.
- The adoption **process needs to be made more transparent**.
- **Special assistance to families in rural areas** who are not aware of legal adoption procedures or don't like to follow the legal procedure.
- **Nationwide IEC campaign** to eliminate the prejudice and social stigma attached for adoption.

1.2.5. CHILD MARRIAGE

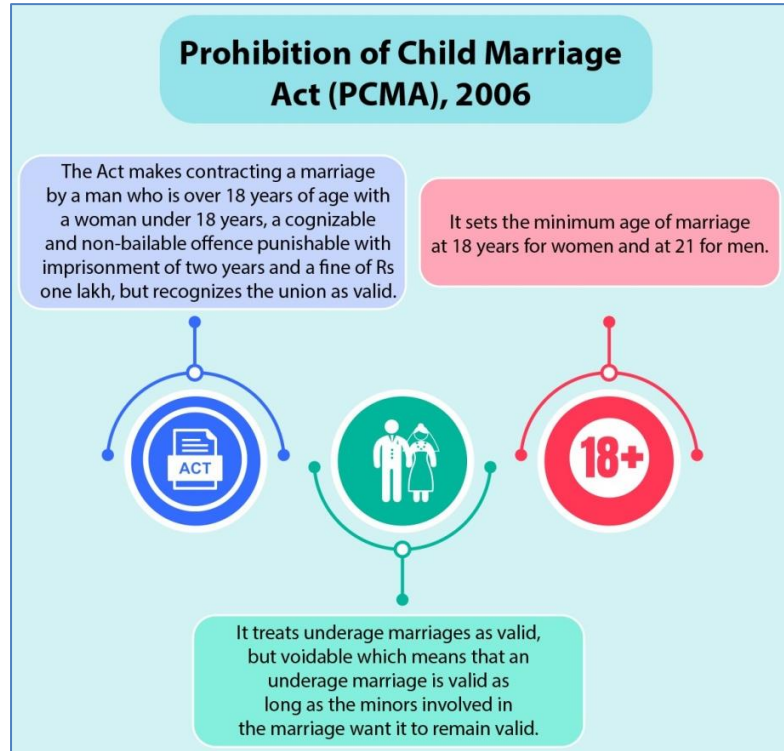
Why in news

The Odisha government has rolled out a plan to make the state completely free of child marriage by 2030.

About child marriage

- Child marriage can be described as a **formal marriage, or an informal union entered into by an individual before attaining the prescribed eligible age**.

- As per the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, the marriageable age is 21 for males and 18 for females.
- **Severity of prevalence of child marriages in India**
 - India has the largest number of brides in the world – **one-third of the global total.**
 - **Nearly 16% of adolescent girls** aged 15-19 are currently **married.**
 - The problem of child marriage is **widely spread across the country**, however, it is **most common in northern, eastern and western India** like in Jharkhand, Bihar, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, among others.
 - According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data of **2020**, a total of **785 cases were registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.**

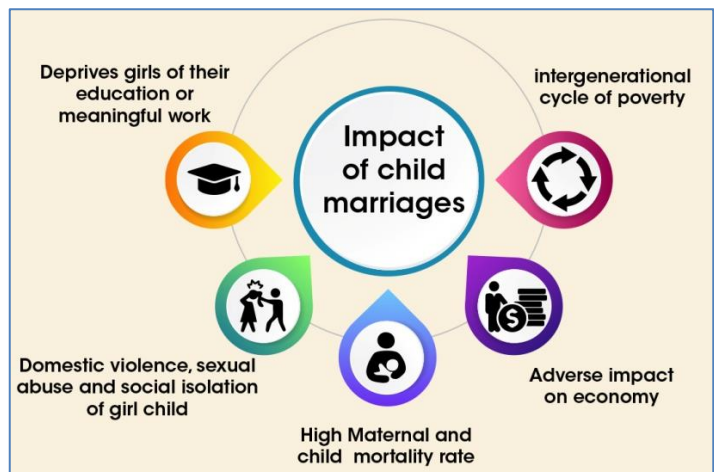


Challenges to prevent child marriages

- **Cultural:** The practice of child marriage in northern India is closely associated with pious occasions such as **Akha Teej in Rajasthan** when mass child wedding takes place in many districts however administration fails to stop these weddings due to social pressure.
- **Poverty:** In poor communities, marrying off a daughter means one less mouth.
- **Patriarchal attitudes:** Child marriage is often seen as a defense against premarital sex, and the duty to protect the girl from sexual violence and harassment is transferred from father to husband.
 - Child marriage can be linked to **restoring or maintaining family honor**, a source of financial gain or means to settle a debt. A girl may be offered in marriage as a means of **reparation for a crime or to settle a debt among disputing families**, even when the girl was not involved in either situation
- **Skewed sex ratio:** In many states like Gujarat and Haryana sex ratio is too skewed to find a bride. As a result of this, forced marriage whereby a girl is abducted or bought by the future husband has become a norm.
- **Ineffective implementation of law:** Lack of proper age documentation, and overall lack of protection for the human rights of children along with ineffective implementation of law like PCMA, 2006 is also a major hurdle in eliminating child marriages.

Efforts to curtail child marriages before independence

- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy** created the **Bramho Samaj** in 1828 that sought to break the shackles of the caste system, and the fight against Sati that saved the lives of many women. He also advocated for property rights for women and fought child marriage.
- **The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929/Sharda act** passed in the Imperial Legislative Council of India, fixed the age of marriage for girls at 14 years and boys at 18 years.



Way ahead

- **Improve law enforcement mechanism:** The effective enforcement of PCMA, 2006 must be ensured with strong political and administrative will power.

- **Compulsory registration of marriages:** The Supreme Court in “**Seema vs. Ashwini Kumar, 2006**” had directed that registration of all types of marriages should be made mandatory.
- **Increasing girl’s access to schooling and higher education:** **Kanyashree Prakalpa scheme** of the West Bengal government, a Conditional Cash Transfer scheme, aims to promote secondary education among females and to stop marriage of girls before the official age of 18.
- **Ensuring safety and security of girls:** Effective implementation of **Immoral Traffic Prevention Act 1956** along with effective implementation of **UJJAWALA scheme** is called for prevention from immoral trafficking and rehabilitation of trafficked victims which also abets child marriages.
- **Nationwide awareness campaign for prevention of child marriage:** Media campaigns (like tv serial Balika Vadhu) and India’s **strong tradition of collective action and community organizing for social change** for creating an environment of delaying marriage and empowering adolescent girls.
 - In this regard, the women SHGs and associations need to be encouraged to take collective action for delaying marriage and preventing child marriage.

Global efforts to eliminate child marriages

- **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)-5:** “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”
 - **Target 5.3:** “Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation”.
- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979:** It states that “the betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect.

Conclusion

To end child marriages, society first needs to understand the systems, norms and behaviours that drive it, and what works to end it in different contexts. Girls – in all their diversity – must be at the centre of solutions to end child marriage. Families and communities must be engaged in transforming the negative social norms that limit girls’ choices.

1.3. THE TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (PREVENTION, CARE AND REHABILITATION) BILL, 2021**Why in news?**

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has invited comments/suggestions from all the stakeholders on the draft ‘Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021’ (TIP Bill).

About human trafficking

- **Definition:** The **trade of humans** for the purpose of forced labour, sexual slavery, prostitution, domestic servitudes for the trafficker or others.
- **Means:** Physical force, child marriages, false promises for marriages or jobs.
- **Law:** Trafficking is covered under Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013, Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act (ITPA) of 1956.
- **Current status:** Trafficking **increased by 14.3% in 2019** as compared to the previous year (NCRB).
 - **Five states with most children trafficked are** West Bengal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka.

Reasons for India’s inability to eradicate human trafficking

- **Globalization:** Rise in **demand of cheap labour and sex tourism**.
- **Porous border:** People from countries like Bangladesh and Nepal are trafficked to the Middle East and other destinations via India.
- **High profit, low risk to traffickers:** The ITPA, 1956 is not comprehensive as it only criminalizes trafficking for the purpose of prostitution. Moreover, traffickers, in general, get convicted very rarely. All these makes trafficking lucrative.
- **Bureaucratic-politician-traffickers’ nexus:** It results in **victimization of trafficked persons**.

Steps taken

- **Ujjawala Schemes:** For Prevention, Rescue, Rehabilitation, Reintegration and Repatriation of victims trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation.
- **Comprehensive Scheme** ‘Strengthening law enforcement response in India against Trafficking in Persons through Training and Capacity Building’ to establish 330 Anti Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) and impart training to 10,000 police

- **Related laws:** The POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act 2012, Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, etc.
- **Judicial Colloquium on human trafficking:** It is being held at the High court level to train and sensitize the trial court judicial officers.
- **Efforts by State Government:** e.g. The Punjab Prevention of Human Smuggling Act, 2012.
- India is a signatory of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons of the UNTOC (UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime).
- **Civil Societies:** Various NGOs like the Rescue Foundation, Bachpan Bachao Andolan are working to prevent trafficking.

Way ahead

- **Legislative reforms:** In the TIP Bill, 2021 concerns about absence of community-based rehabilitation, missing definition of reintegration and about the funds related to rehabilitation of survivors should be addressed.
- **Border measures:** Stringent enforcement of cross border trafficking, secure vigilance in trafficking routes and proper social accountability is needed.
- **Police and judicial reforms:** For ensuring accountability and transparency, reducing the burden of judiciary, and proper law enforcement.
- **Economic and social policies:** Like enhancing levels of social protection, basic education, employability and promoting gender sensitization, etc.
- **Awareness-raising measures:** In traffic prone places.
- **Justice Verma Committee (2013) recommendations:** Amend IPC on slavery to criminalise trafficking by threat, force or inducement or employing such trafficked person. The juvenile and women protective homes should be placed under the legal guardianship of High Courts.

Conclusion

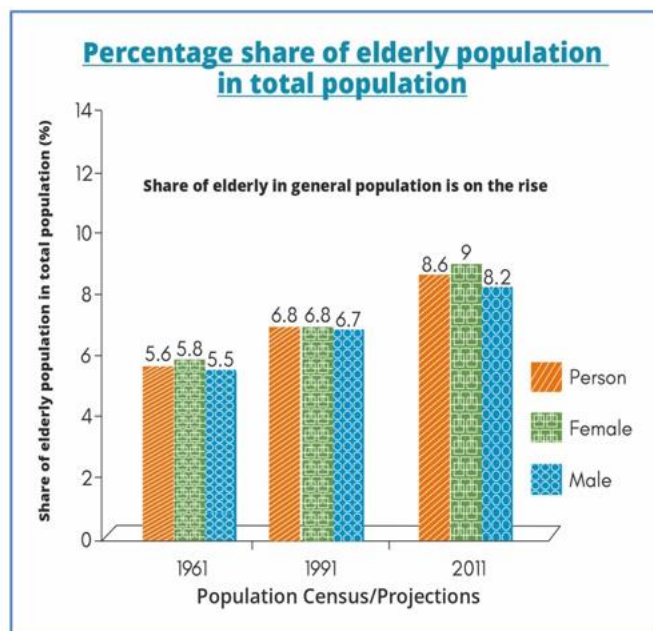
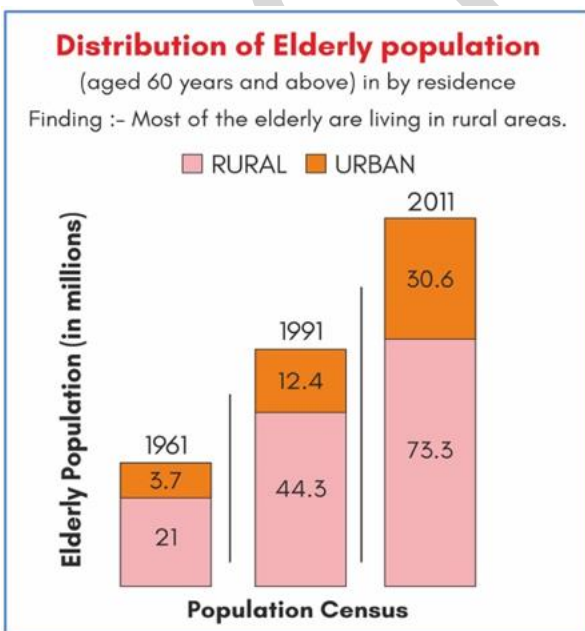
Social evil like human trafficking jeopardizes the dignity and security of individuals, and severely violates their human rights. To combat trafficking, strong political will is vital in implementing anti-trafficking mandates. The problem can be solved if strong steps are taken, and policies are implemented effectively.

Mains 365 - Social Issues

1.4. ELDERLY IN INDIA

Why in news?

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has brought out its publication ‘Elderly in India 2021’. This is the 5th series of this publication that was started in 2001.



Issues and challenges

- **Nuclear family:** As a result of this, there is also a decline in the capacity of the family to provide the required care to their elderly family members.

- **Inadequate government owned old age home:** The ‘Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007’ mandates that every city should have a government-run old age home, but this is not the case.
- **Low digital literacy:** According to NSS 75th round on Education in India, only 5.3% of males and only 1.7% of females of 60 years and above can operate a computer. The gap is higher in rural areas.
- **Declining social indicators:** According to the **Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI) 2020 report**, 75% of the elderly population of India suffers from one or more chronic diseases such as arthritis, hypertension, cataract, etc. Also, declining income, limited pension system may adversely affect their food security also.

Schemes and Programmes for the Welfare of Elderly Persons

- **National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP), 1999:** The Policy envisaged State support to ensure financial and food security, health care, shelter and other needs of older persons, among others. A **new National Policy for Senior Citizens** is under finalization.
- **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007:** The Act provides for: maintenance of parents/ senior citizens by children/ relatives made obligatory and justiciable through Tribunals.
- **National Action Plan for the Welfare of Senior Citizens (NAPSrC):** This Plan takes care of the top four needs of the senior citizens viz., financial security, food, health care and human interaction /life of dignity.
- **Senior Citizens Welfare Fund:** It was established in 2016 for such schemes for the promotion of the welfare of senior citizens, which are in line with the **National Policy on Older Person**.
- **National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSrC):** It was constituted in 1999 to oversee implementation of the Policy and advise the Government.
- **National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE):** Being run by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).
- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY):** Under the Ayushman Bharat, launched by MoHFW.
- **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS):** Being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development since 2007.

Way ahead

- **Data driven policy: Research in Geriatrics and Gerontology** needs to be further encouraged.
- **Digital empowerment of elderly:** Governments at various levels and civil society need to modify and implement policies integrating older persons into the digital era.
- **Enhancing pension:** Pension income should be at least 50% more than the minimum wages for older persons. Universal pension scheme and **improvement in the Atal Pension Yojana** to bring many informal sector workers under its ambit.
- **Affordable medical care:** Community care, telehealth services along with expanding and strengthening the networks of health care provision for older adults.
- **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007:** It contains no assurances for childless adults. Thus, it must be complemented and supported by appropriate government initiatives.
- **Women’s and gender specific issues:** With the feminization of elderly population, India must also implement programs and policies that ensure gender equality (like ensuring women’s property and inheritance rights among others).
- **Government owned old age home:** These homes with full-fledged daycare facilities, nurses, psychologists, and counsellors who can help the older adults to cope with the singularity of old age, are needed.

Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030)

- Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030) is endorsed by World Health Assembly in August 2020.
- World Health Organisation (WHO) defines healthy ageing as **“the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age.”**
 - Functional ability is about having the capabilities that **enable all people to be and do what they have reason to value.**
 - Functional ability consists of the **intrinsic capacity of the individual, relevant environmental characteristics and the interaction between them.**
 - **Intrinsic capacity is the composite of all the physical and mental capacities** of an individual.
- **Healthy ageing replaces the World Health Organization’s previous focus on Active ageing**, a policy framework developed in 2002.
 - Active ageing is the **process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.**

Conclusion

India faces unprecedented population aging due to lengthening lifespans. This demographic shift poses complex challenges to Indian society in the form of a rising burden of non-communicable diseases, a vulnerable female-heavy older adult population, a changing family structure, and a lack of a social safety net. Successfully

addressing these challenges will require equally complex and ambitious changes and innovations in health, fiscal, and social policies.

1.5. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment **launched a 6- month community based Inclusive Development (CBID) Program** on rehabilitation of Divyangjan/Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

More on News

- Program aims to create a pool of **grass-root rehabilitation workers at community level** who can work alongside ASHA and Anganwadi workers to handle cross disability issues and facilitate inclusion of PwDs in the society.

Disability in India

- **Definition:** PwD means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others.
 - The rights of persons with disabilities Act, 2016 recognises **21 types of disabilities** including low vision, Leprosy cured persons, etc.
- **Current status: 2.68 Cr persons** (2.21% of the total population) are ‘disabled’ of which 56% are males and 44% are females (Census 2011).
 - Majority (69%) of the disabled population resided in rural areas.
 - **Only around 55% (1.46 Cr.) are literates.**
 - **Only 36% of the total PWDs are workers.**
 - **More than 50% of the children** with multiple **disabilities** or with **mental illness never attended educational institutions.**

Challenges faced by Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)

- **Social and attitudinal:** Stereotyping like many people consider PWDs unhealthy because of their impairments. Thus, Pwds have to face stigma, prejudice, and discrimination at multiple levels.
- **Accessibility:** Design and construction of indoor and outdoor facilities can prevent them from going to school and hospitals, shopping, etc. As per estimates, only 5-15% of people who require assistive devices and technologies have access to them.
- **Communication challenges:** Experienced by people who have disabilities that affect hearing, speaking, reading, writing, and/or understanding.
- **Policy barriers:** It included lack of awareness or enforcement of existing laws which are meant to ease the life of PWDs.
- **Poverty and disability reinforce one another:** Poor health and nutrition can lead to disability. Equally, the onset of disability can have an adverse effect on education, employment, etc. resulting in higher rates of poverty.

Way forward

- **Attitudinal Change:** People need to be sensitised for supporting PWDs to live independent and dignified lives.
- **Early diagnostic and intervention centres:** It can help in primary prevention (prevention of the manifestation of the disability) and Secondary prevention (reducing the duration or severity of disability).
- **Improving access to social protection:** In addition to disability-specific social protection, PwDs should have access to other programmes—including child and family allowances, unemployment benefits and social assistance schemes.

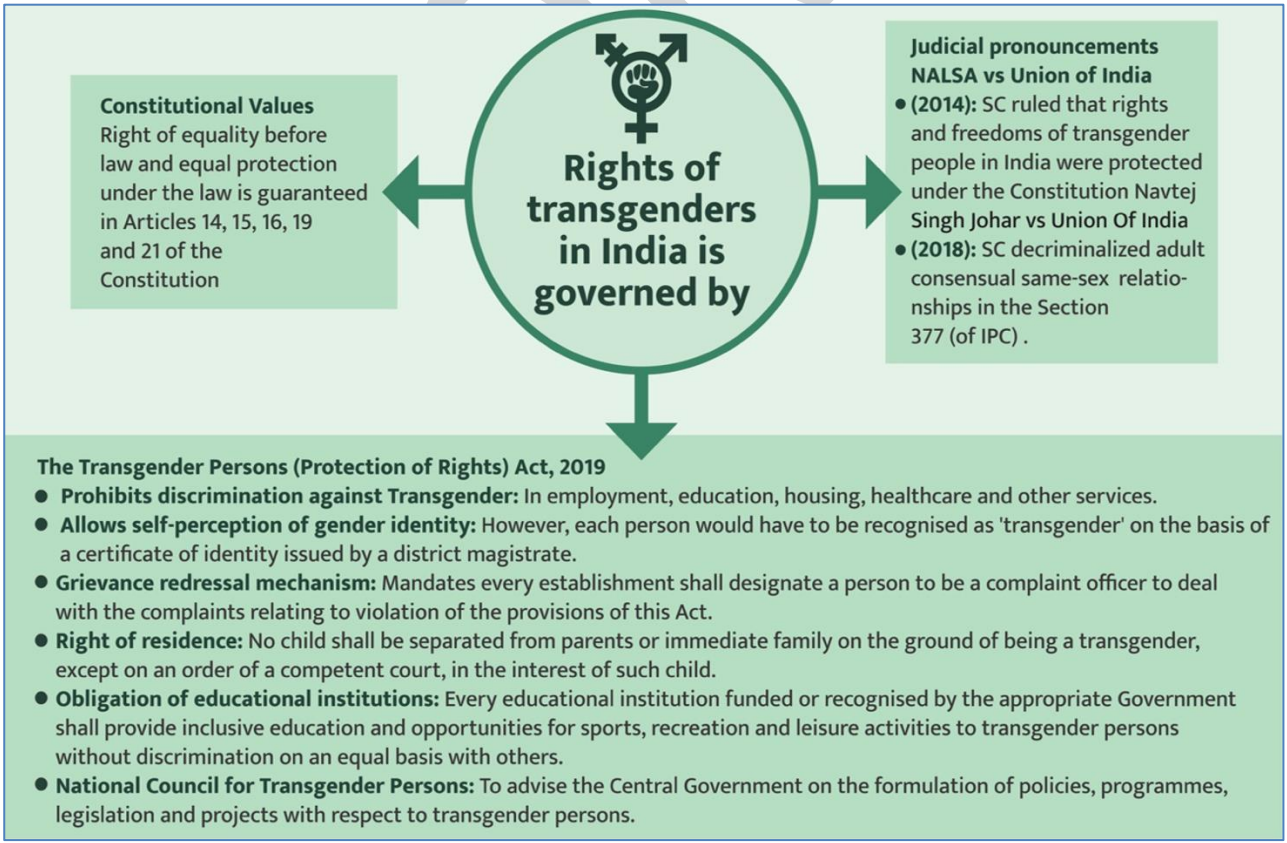
Initiatives taken in India		
Acts	Policy/Rules	Schemes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. • Key features of the act: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reservation in government jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2006 • Ratified United Nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Fund for Persons with Disabilities • Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/ Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP Scheme) to assist the needy disabled persons in procuring durable, sophisticated

<p>increased from 3% to 4%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Right to free education for every child (6 to 18 years of age) with benchmark disability. ○ 5% reservation in seats in Government and Government aided higher educational institutions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999 ● Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 	<p>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adoption of Incheon Strategy “To make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific. ● India is also a signatory to ● Declaration on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region ● Biwako Millennium Framework working towards an inclusive, barrier free and rights-based society 	<p>and scientifically manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scheme for Implementing of Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 (SIPDA) which covers following provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan): To enhance the accessibility of the built environment, transport system and information and communication ecosystem. ○ Skill Development Programme for PwDs. ○ To establish early diagnostic and intervention centres at District Headquarters/other places having Government Medical Colleges. ● Unique ID for Persons with Disabilities” project is being implemented with a view of creating a National Database for PwDs, and to issue a Unique Disability Identity Card (UDID) to each person with disabilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recently, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPWD), make it mandatory for all States/UTs to grant certificate of disability through online mode only using Unique Disability Identity (UDID) portal ○ A disability certificate is a necessity for PWDs as they can avail the benefits of different government schemes by furnishing the document.
--	--	---

1.6. TRANSGENDER

Why in news?

Recently, Karnataka has become the first state in the country to provide 1% horizontal reservation for transgender people in all government services.



About Transgender community

- **The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019** defines a Transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth.

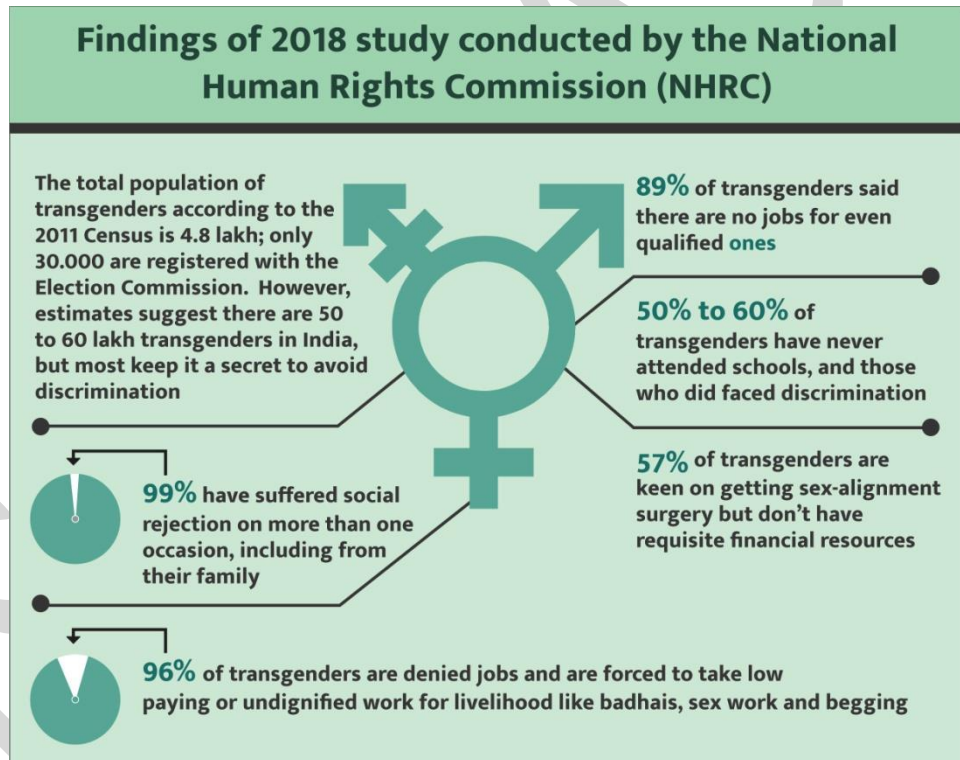
- Since the transgender community **does not fit into the general category of 'male' or 'female'**, they face various challenges which render them as **the most marginalised communities in the country**.

Challenges faced by transgenders in the face of COVID-19

- **Livelihood issues:** The community's livelihood is largely dependent on social interactions.
- **Health issues:** The HIV prevalence among Transgender, in India, was estimated to be 3.1% in 2017, the second-highest prevalence among all key populations in the country.
- **Poor mental health:** More often they are facing stress, anxiety and may also slip into depression.
- **Increased incidence of domestic violence**

Roadmap ahead to ensure ease of living for Transgender community during a pandemic

- **Short term measures**
 - **Health:** Coronavirus testing centres should make themselves as 'trans-friendly.' Separate isolation wards can be provided for people belonging to the trans-community.
 - **Address the basic needs of Transgender** such as housing, food and employment.
 - **Psychological Counselling:** It should be woven around a sense of safety, sense of calmness, building hope, self and collective efficiency and connectedness.
 - Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE) should take efforts to make all the **social welfare schemes more accessible to the Transgender community**.
- **Long term measures**
 - **Alternate means of livelihood:** Government should make efforts to provide similar vocational training to Transgender community so that they could be self-employed.
 - **Systemic changes in policy making:** There should be a focus on establishing linkages with livelihood programs, literacy programs and other development programs.
 - Introduction of **scholarships for gender non-conforming persons** at state and national level.
 - **Sexual harassment mechanisms should be gender neutral** and domestic violence based on gender should be recognized as a separate offense.
 - The parliament should pass an **Anti-Discrimination Bill** that penalizes discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender.



Conclusion

Transgenders are an integral part of Indian society with all the rights that other communities enjoy. COVID-19 pandemic adds to their vulnerabilities. Therefore, special provisions need to be implemented effectively to ensure they could cherish the Constitutional values as well as the ethos of equality of this country.

1.7. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AT- A GLANCE

Current status

- » Indigenous peoples in India comprise an estimated population of 104 million (8.6% of the national population), almost 90% of them living in rural areas. 705 ethnic groups are notified as STs that includes 75 identified PVTGs.

Definition: Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment.

Inherent rights to indigenous people

- » Collective and individual right to their **ancestral land, territories and resources;**
- » Right to **self-government by their own institutions;**
- » Right to **fair and equitable benefit sharing from conservation and development actions;**
- » Right to **conserve, develop, use and protect their traditional knowledge.**

Constitutional provisions to protect rights of indigenous people

- » **Fifth Schedule of Constitution of India (Article 244): special system of administration for scheduled areas and tribal areas in any state except the four** (Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram). **Sixth Schedule of the Constitutions:** Administration of the tribal areas in the **four states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.**

Legal provisions to protect rights of indigenous people

- » **Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation & Resettlement (LARR) Act, 2013:** Consent of landowners required for various projects. The Act exempts 13 laws (such as the National Highways Act, 1956 and the Railways Act, 1989) from its ambit.
- » **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006:** To recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation for forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other

1.7.1. STATE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Why in news?

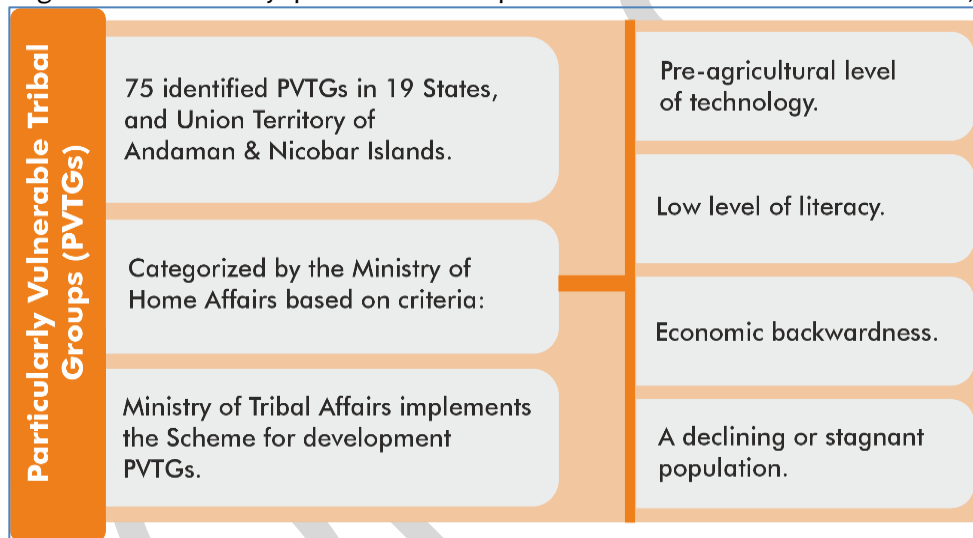
Recently, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs released **State of the world's indigenous peoples: Rights to Land, territories and resources report.**

Findings in the report

- Report mentions the **recognition and protection of land titles and tenure of indigenous people is crucial to attaining SDGs** to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030.
- Report calls on the UN to **include indigenous peoples and their organizations in the sustainable development framework.**

Challenges for indigenous people in India

- **Threats to traditional knowledge practices:** Because they are undervalued and ignored. Also, there is commodification of indigenous cultures by proliferation of products on the market that imitate, misrepresent and profit from the alleged associations.
- **Land dispossession:** Due to economic policies, globalisation, growing search for rich agricultural areas and natural wealth.
- **Human rights violation:** Indigenous peoples continue to face serious human rights abuses, most often for defending their rights and their lands, communities etc.
- **Lack of access to education:** Due to their geographic and politically marginalized status.
- **Health issues:** Such as illnesses from pesticides and extractive industries, malnutrition, diabetes and HIV/AIDS due to their limited access to mainstream population and health facilities.



Measures needs to be taken

- **Addressing legal loopholes:** To effectively implement the Forest Rights Act, the LARR Act and acquire prior consent of the concerned tribal communities before undertaking any infrastructure development and mining plans and projects in tribal areas.
- **National Action Plan:** For implementation of the **UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights** which provides actionable steps for governments and companies to meet their respective duties and responsibilities **to prevent human rights abuses in company operations** and provide remedies if such abuses take place.
- **Effective, accessible and affordable dispute resolution:** To adequately recognize, respect and implement indigenous rights to lands, territories and resources.
- **Education:** Community-based education and language programs with adequate funding from States.
- **Health care:** Indigenous individuals have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services and that should be protected by government. Furthermore, there must be ongoing integration needs of indigenous peoples into health programmes, plans, projects, and policies.

2. DEMOGRAPHY

2.1. POPULATION CONTROL POLICY

Why in News?

Recently, on World Population Day (11th July), the Uttar Pradesh (UP) government **announced a new population policy for 2021-2030.**

More on News

- The policy cites **strain on resources due to growing population** as the need to have a population control policy in place.
- **UP is India's most populous state** with a population of around 220 million.

Arguments in favor of a Population Control Policy

At present, **India hosts around 16 per cent of the world's population** (According to a UN report, India will cross China as the **world's most populous country by 2027**) with only 2.45% of the global surface area and 4% of the water resources. This is resulting in **certain challenges in terms of:**

- **Low standard of living:** Meeting the demand, for a fast-growing population, of food, clothes & housing is difficult. This results in slum areas starvations, etc.
- **Unemployment:** Overpopulation aggravates the problem of unemployment and disguised unemployment.
- **Eco-degradation:** Rise in pressure of natural resources leads to deforestation, soil, air and water pollution among others.
- **Pressure on infrastructure:** Facilities of transport, communication, health, education among others are overwhelmed due to too much rise in population.



Arguments against Population Control Policy

- **Already dipping Total Fertility Rate (TFR):** 28 out of 36 States/UTs have already achieved the replacement level fertility of 2.1 or less.

- **Forced tubectomy:** India has one of the world's highest rates of female sterilizations (37% of women having the Tubectomy). This proportion may rise in case of any coercion for population control.
- **Female feticide:** A desire for male children could led to reported abortions and infanticide.
- **Family as an institution may destabilize:** Men divorced their wives to run for local body elections and families gave up children for adoption to avoid disqualification in states that had adopted a two-child policy.
- **Could not resolve the problem:** For example, taking away subsidies would reinforce extreme poverty but not resolve the issues of lack of awareness or the inability to afford contraceptives among others.

Two-child policy in India

- Presently, India has **no national policy** mandating specific number of children.
 - **So far, 12 states**, including Assam, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, already **have some form of the two-child norm in place** for those running for elected government posts or government jobs.
- #### Negative Consequences of having such two-child policy
- **Domestic experience not encouraging:** After the 1991 census, several states prohibited those who had more than two children from holding any panchayat post.
 - Instead of better family planning, this had unintended consequences like **men deserting or divorcing wives if they became pregnant a third time**, men abandoning or disowning their third child, sex-selective and unsafe abortions etc.
 - **International experience not encouraging:** Any coercion to have a certain number of children is counter-productive and leads to demographic distortions.
 - For example: China's one-child policy led to sex-selective abortions and an ageing population with a fast-declining workforce. The skewed sex ratio also led to increased trafficking of women and forced prostitution.
 - **Contravention of violation international laws:** India became a signatory to the **International Conference on Population and Development Declaration in 1994**. Thus, India is committed to honour the individual right of the couples to decide freely the number of children they want to have.

Measures taken by government for population control

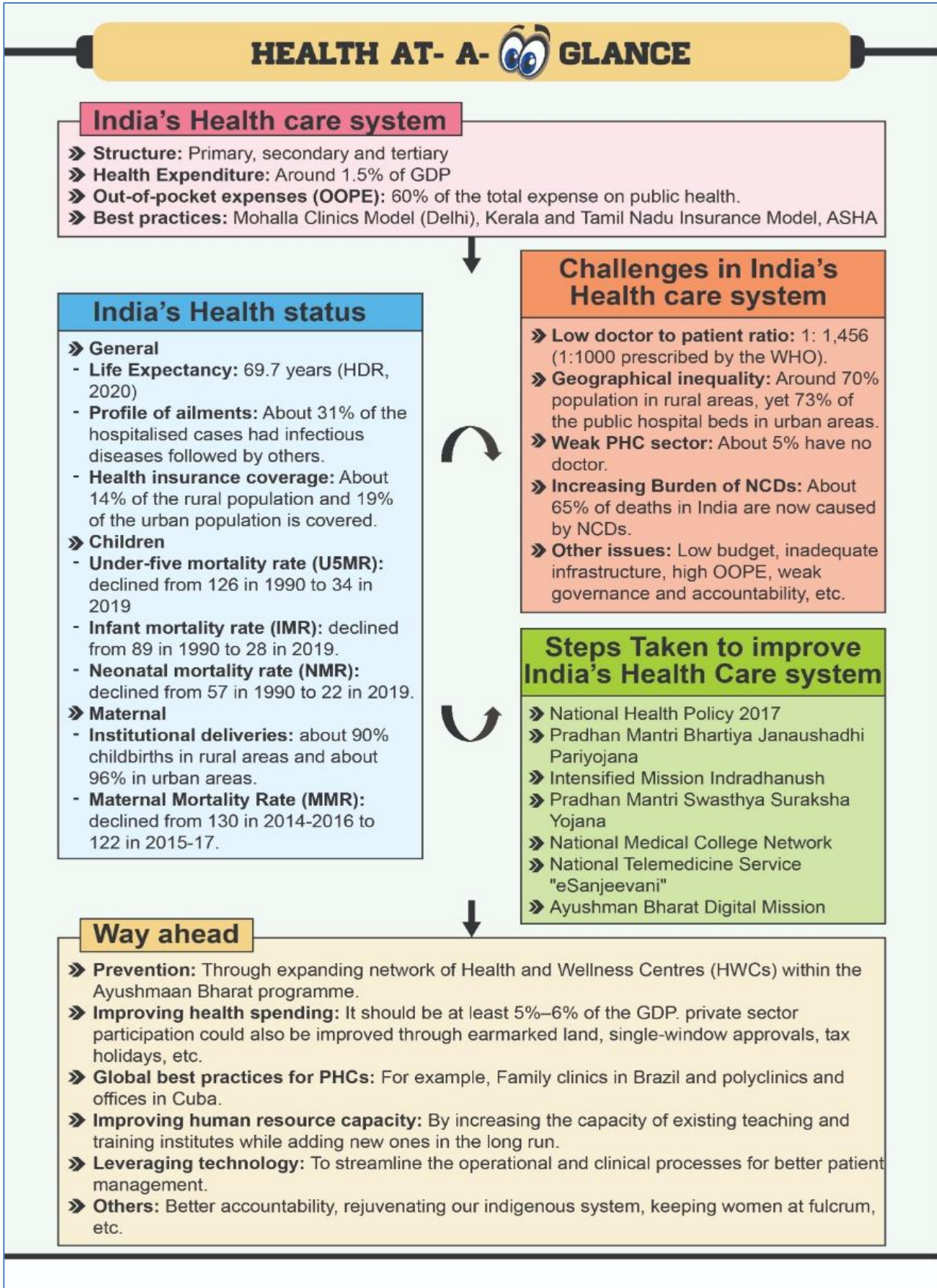
- India was the **first country in the world** to have launched a **National Programme for Family Planning in 1952**.
- **National Population Policy 2000: National Commission on Population was formed** to review, monitor and give directions for implementation of the National Population Policy.
- **Mission Parivar Vikas:** For increasing access to contraceptives in 146 high fertility districts in 7 high focus states.
- **Postpartum Intrauterine contraceptive device (PPIUCD) incentive scheme** under which PPIUCD services are provided post-delivery.
- **Vasectomy fortnight** is observed throughout the country in November each year.
- **Scheme for Home Delivery of contraceptives** by ASHAs at the doorstep of beneficiaries has been taken up.
- **Family Planning Media Campaign**

Way Forward

- **Choice-based strategy:** So that people voluntarily decide to have fewer children because of access to education or maybe by giving them positive incentives
- **Improved Family Planning Programs:** Enhance awareness about benefits of birth spacing and accessibility to contraception.
- **The Cairo Consensus (1994):** It underlines new approaches to population and development, with women's health, empowerment, and rights at the center.
- **Better health care:** for ensuring decline in child mortality that precedes the decline in fertility.
- **Investment in Education:** As it enhances the motivation for birth control. If India would have ensured at least five years of schooling or primary education for its girls, its fertility rate could be well below replacement level.
- **Higher economic growth:** Aiming for a higher rate of economic growth, which automatically reduces the reproductive rate. If India manages to lift the poorest 20% out of poverty, the fertility rate would be about 1.9.

3. HEALTH

3.1. HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



3.1.1. SECONDARY HEALTH CARE IN INDIA

Why in News?

Recently, NITI Aayog released a performance assessment report “Best Practices in the Performance of District Hospitals”.

More on News

- It is the **first-ever performance assessment of district hospitals** and marks a shift in healthcare delivery system towards **data-driven governance for communities and people availing health services.**
 - Report is **released jointly by NITI Aayog, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and WHO India.**

About Secondary healthcare

- It refers to the **second tier of the health system, in which patients from primary health care are referred** to specialists in higher hospitals for treatment.
 - The principal difference between primary and secondary services is in the range and specialization of the staff available.
- It is **provided by district or regional hospitals** that offer outpatient consultation and inpatient services including emergency care (refer infographic for its main units).

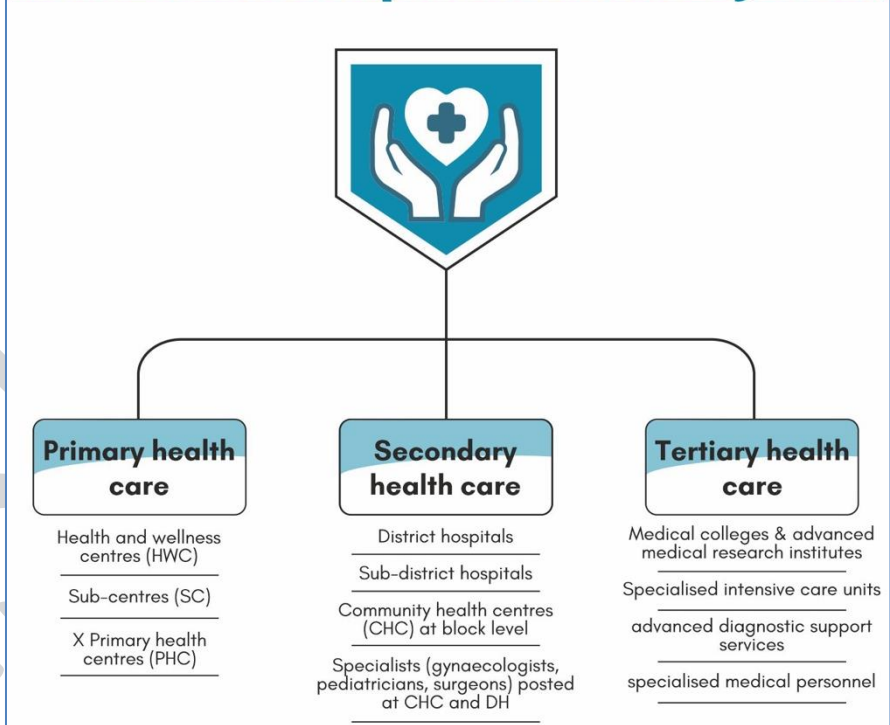
Challenges in Secondary Healthcare

- Accessibility:** to secondary and tertiary care is a challenge, majorly for rural India. About 80% of doctors, 75% of dispensaries and 60% of hospitals are present in urban areas.
- Non availability of skilled workforce:** Lack of specialists at this level especially in public hospitals force patients to go for expensive private healthcare.
- Weak Primary health care (PHC) sector:** An inadequate feeder system from primary care to secondary and tertiary impacts not only the filtering of patients but also deeply impacts prevention and early detection.
- Unmanageable patient load:** Even prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare facilities had been feeling the strain due to unmanageable patient-load.
- Weak governance and accountability:** Recent health tragedies in Gorakhpur Hospital, Chhattisgarh Sterilization camps, Kolkata hospital tragedy and many others put the serious question of accountability, if any mishap occurs.
- Low healthcare spending:** Overall, India’s public health expenditure (sum of central and state spending) has **remained between 1.2% to 1.6% of GDP** between 2008-09 and 2019-20.

Key Highlights of the report

- District hospitals in India have **on an average 24 beds per 1 lakh population**, with Bihar having the lowest average of six beds and Puducherry the highest of 222.
 - Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) 2012 guidelines **recommend district hospitals to maintain at least 22 beds per 1 lakh population** (based on 2001 census).
- A **district hospital in India has 11 support services on an average** against IPHS identified 14 support services that a district hospital is expected to maintain.
- Only 189** (around 27%) of the total 707 districts assessed met the **doctor-to-bed ratio of 29 doctors per 100 beds** in a hospital (based on IPHS norm).
- The **average bed occupancy rate in district hospitals in India is 57%** (IPHS guidelines recommend at least 80% bed occupancy).

India's 3-tiered public health system



- **Lack of pandemic handling capacity:** Global Health Security Index, which measures pandemic preparedness for countries ranked India a lowly 57 (lower than US (1), Brazil (22)) highlighting India's vulnerability.

Way Forward

- **Promoting preventive healthcare:** Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) within the Ayushman Bharat programme could become centres of disease prevention thereby reducing pressure on secondary level.
- **Better patient management at PHCs:** There is a need to adopt technology wherever possible to streamline the operational and clinical processes.

Draft Model Concession Agreement for Setting up Medical Colleges under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) guideline document by NITI Aayog

- It was aimed at **addressing shortage of qualified doctors and bridge gap in medical education.**
 - Under the proposed PPP model, NITI Aayog has envisioned the **concessionaire to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the medical college and also upgrade, operate and maintain the associated district Hospital** with a minimum annual student intake of 150 MBBS seats.
- **Benefit of such an agreement**
 - It will aid Central/state government to bridge the gaps in the medical education by **augmenting their limited resources and finances.**
 - ✓ It would augment **medical seats and also rationalise the costs** of medical education.
 - It **will ensure specialized healthcare services** availability and accessibility at district level.
 - It will help in **leveraging upon private sector management efficiencies** in providing quality care at these hospitals.
- **Concerns raised against such an arrangement**
 - As concessionaire shall be allowed to charge fee from patients, it **might lead to exclusion of vulnerable sections** as district hospitals are seen as the last port of call for a majority of such patients.
 - Concessionaire **will be handed over the hospitals at an extremely low fee** with no mention of health outcomes that can be expected. This can result in accountability issues.
 - Medical education is already very expensive and out of reach of the majority of deserving candidates. The **addition of so many colleges in the private sector will lead to further exclusion of such students.**
 - There are also **concerns over private sector participation in the National Health Programmes** at district level.
 - **Without increasing and updating the government spending** on health care, rather handing over district hospitals to the private sector at throwaway prices, will only benefit the latter.

- **Improving health spending:** Government expenditure on health must urgently be scaled up, from <2% currently to at least 5%–6% of the GDP. Subsidized loans, earmarked land, single-window approvals, tax holidays, etc. can be used for improving private sector participation.
- Increasing insurance coverage
- Involvement of SHGs, Panchayati Raj Institution and Strengthening of ANMs, ASHA.

3.1.2. UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

Why in news?

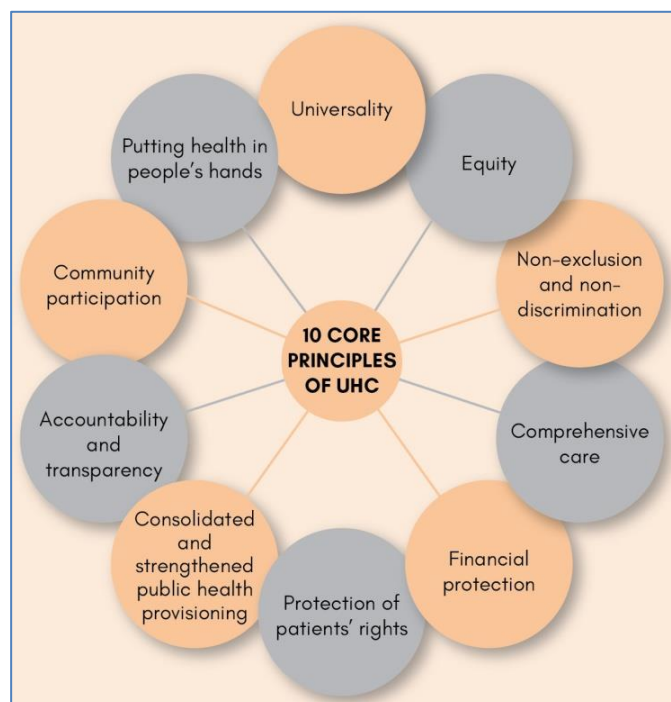
Covid-19 experience has proved the need to revisit the requisites to achieve the target of Universal Health Coverage in India.

About Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

- **According to WHO,** Universal health coverage means that all people have access to the health services they need, when and where they need them, without financial hardship.

Why does UHC matter for India?

- **Effective health care coverage:** As per WHO estimates, around 600 million people fail to access the health services they need (largest in the world) with key population groups such as children under-consuming vital health services.



- **Poverty Reduction:** 63 million people in India (4.8% of the population) are estimated to be living below the poverty line because they have to pay high out-of-pocket payments for health services.
- **Improving health outcomes:** Such as increase in life expectancy, lower rates of child deaths and reduce health inequalities between different groups in society.
- **Reducing susceptibility to infectious diseases and anti-microbial resistance**
- **Major driver of economic growth:** UHC can generate economic returns at least ten times the initial investments in the form of generation of jobs for healthcare professionals, support staff and people employed in manufacturing medicines.
- **Societal Well-being:** UHC also improves life chances for disadvantaged groups and can therefore reduce inequalities in areas such as household wealth, gender, age, urban-rural divides and between ethnic groups.

Challenges in implementing UHC

- **Chronic Underfunding:** The Combined expenditure of Centre and States on Health is around 1.5% of India's GDP (much below the target of 2.5% as set under the National Health Policy, 2017).
- **Inadequate Physical infrastructure**
 - **Shortage of healthcare workers:** Number of doctors, nurses, hospital beds, paramedic and support staff are way less than the desired requirement.
 - **Shortage of hospitals:** Most of the secondary and tertiary care hospitals are located in Tier-1 and Tier-2 Cities. Similarly, most of the doctors are unwilling to practice in Rural areas.
- **Lack of functioning primary health facilities.**
- **Predominance of private healthcare:** Private healthcare caters to around 70% of India's population.
- **Low penetration of insurance policies:** 86% of people in rural areas and 82% in urban areas do not have access to insurance coverage.
- **Lack of health awareness/ focus on preventive healthcare:** Social determinants of health such as educational status, poor functional literacy, low-income level among others lead to poor outlook towards healthy lifestyle.

Steps Taken to achieve UHC in India

- **National Health Policy 2017** laid out the roadmap to achieving UHC emphasising on increasing levels of public financing (to 2.5% GDP by 2025) and allocating a large proportion of these resources towards primary care services and decreasing the proportion of households facing catastrophic health expenditure from the current levels by 25 per cent, till 2025.
- **High Level Expert Group (HLEG) on Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** was constituted by the erstwhile Planning Commission in 2010, with the mandate of developing a framework for providing easily accessible and affordable health care to all Indians.
- **15th Finance Commission** made similar recommendations related to an increase in state expenditure for health systems strengthening by 2022.
- **Ayushman Bharat Scheme**
- **Enhanced Budgetary Allocations**
- **Rapid strides towards digital health and telemedicine**

Way forward

- **Increase public financing for health** to at least 2.5% of GDP.
- **Inclusion of the private sector:** The government must take the lead in addressing the trust deficit and regulate the private sector to collectively deliver on the realization of UHC.
- **Guarantee universal access to free medicines and diagnostic services** to reduce the financial burden of health services on the population and provide a major boost to generic medicines manufacturing.
- **"Health in all policies" approach:** Improving social determinants of health will require a dedicated focus on policies and practices in non-health sectors that impact health and health equity. This includes ensuring access to care where needed such as ensuring mid-day meals despite lockdown to avoid malnutrition, and access to information at the right time mobilising community healthcare workers etc.
- **Incentivizing wellness-seeking behaviour:** Initiatives like Poshan Abhiyaan, which aims to eliminate the malaise of malnutrition, Fit India Movement, are the steps in the right direction.
- **Harnessing the potential of Digital health**
- **Community Participation and Citizen Engagement.**

3.2. DIGITALISATION OF HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister chaired a high-level meeting to review the **National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)**.

What is digitalisation of healthcare?

- It refers to the **integration of medical knowledge with IT applications** or IT technologies, with the aim of **improving the medical care and supervision of patients.**

- With India's IT capacity, rapid adoption of mobile technologies and widespread broadband network services it is possible for India to become a model for digital health adoption.

- Digital healthcare includes** Telemedicine, Robot-assisted surgery, self-monitoring healthcare devices, electronic health records, e-pharmacies, e-insurance etc.

Challenges to digitisation

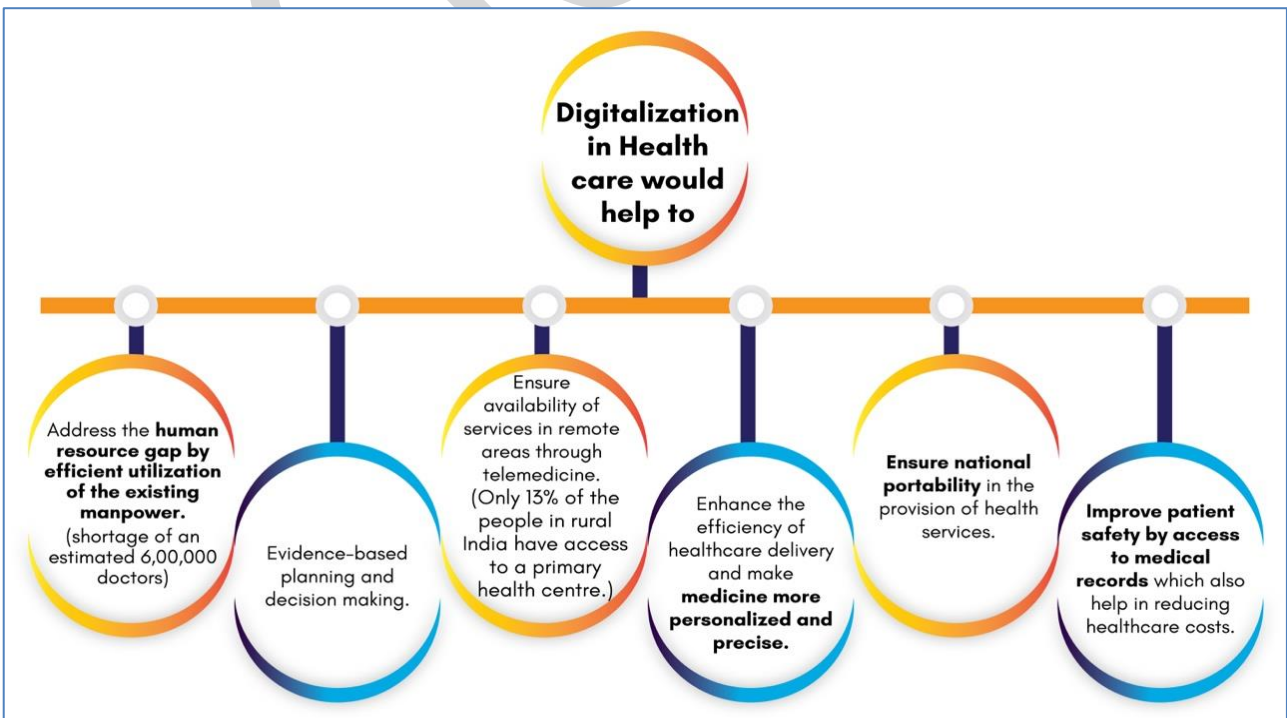
- Lack of consensus:** Since health is a state subject, it will not be possible to dictate from the central level what these systems should look like, nor will states alone be able to fashion a national lattice of these systems without central leadership.
- Undeveloped infrastructure:** With a few exceptions, little computerization is in place in the public health sector, especially at Primary Health Centres (PHCs), but even in the nation's largest public hospitals.
- Fragmented healthcare delivery:** A large number of small facilities with poor economies of scale and with limited technological capacity are making the task of 'wiring' the health sector difficult and costlier.
- Lack of dominant HIT (Health IT) vendors or entrepreneurs:** The advantage of having dominant players in a marketplace is that they are more likely to be adequately capitalized, thus being able to finance continual innovation.
- Other challenges:** Internet accessibility, Data Safety, information standards etc.

About National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)

- It aims at developing the backbone for a **unified digital health infrastructure.**
- It will include a digital infrastructure comprising:
 - Health ID**—an ID used to uniquely identify people, authenticate them and thread their health records.
 - Digi-Doctor**—a comprehensive repository of all doctors practicing or teaching modern/traditional systems of medicine
 - Health facility registry**- a comprehensive repository of health facilities of the country across different systems of medicine.
 - Electronic Medical Records**—a digital version of a patient's treatment history from a single facility.

Other initiatives for digitalisation of healthcare

- National Digital Health Blueprint (NDHB)** to transition into integrated digital services in a comprehensive and holistic manner.
- Since health is a state subject, states are supported under **National Health Mission (NHM)** for services like Telemedicine, Tele-Radiology, Tele-Oncology, Tele-Ophthalmology and Hospital Information System (HIS).
- Proposed National Health Stack by Niti Aayog**, a nationally shared digital infrastructure usable by both Centre and State across public and private sectors, to enable rapid creation of diverse solutions in health.
- Telemedicine Practice Guidelines, 2020** for regularization and diversification of tele-consultation services across the country.



Way Forward

- **Aadhaar can be used to digitise all data relating to all patients** available not just with government and private hospitals but also with diagnostic centres, laboratories and individual practitioners of all systems of medicine.
- Data about any individual (patient, doctor, etc) must be under the control of that individual and any entity holding that data must first obtain **legitimate consent before sharing the data or processing it in other ways.**
- **Existing PHCs, health and wellness centres, and sub-centres must start a telemedicine element** in their centres. These must be clubbed with higher, specialised hospitals, to provide digital consultation.
- Establishing **model digital health centres in rural settings** with at least one MBBS, or an Ayush doctor, along with a pharmacist and IT operator.
- Government's mega **Jan Aushadhi Yojana can be clubbed with an e-pharmacy** drive so that low-cost drug delivery is ensured. Tie-ups with e-pharmacies such as 1mg, Netmeds etc. needed to be considered.

Digital health and COVID-19

- COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in massive disruptions within health care, **causing rapid dynamic fluctuations in demand, capacity, and even contextual aspects of health care.**
 - **Reductions in face-to-face clinic appointments**, triage cases requiring urgent consultation, postpone non-urgent visits including elective surgeries, and set up new infection control measures.
 - **Reconfiguring of workflows and physical infrastructure** to reduce the risk of health-care-associated transmission.
 - **Reorganising manpower** to meet large and sudden fluctuations in clinical need.
- Digital health can meet these challenges by **increasing access to health-care services for individuals, improving population health, and enhancing the experience of receiving or delivering care.** Some areas of focus are:
 - **Primary prevention:** Mobile applications or mApps (Such as Aarogya Setu) have been used primarily for contact tracing – tracking persons and notifying the authorities.
- **Health Education and promotion:** Google Trends and Maps, Twitter, and Instagram feeds, callertunes (MoFHW) etc have been used even by agencies to track the progress of the diseases and also to spread awareness related to its precautions.
- **Early diagnosis:** Data visualization plays an important role in epidemic/pandemic time series analysis and forecasting. It makes users understand, synthesize, and take pre-emptive action.
- **Treatment:** Rise in Telemedicine consultations, application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create drugs faster, use of robots and drones to relieve exhausted health-care service providers etc.

3.3. AYUSHMAN BHARAT- PRADHAN MANTRI JAN AROGYA YOJANA (PMJAY)

Why in News?

Centre's flagship Ayushman Bharat health insurance programme has completed two years.

About Ayushman Bharat

- It was launched in 2018 as recommended by the National Health Policy 2017, to achieve the vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC).
- It is an attempt to move from a **sectoral and segmented approach of health service delivery to a comprehensive need-based health care service.**
- It is comprising of two interrelated components, which are –
 - **Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)**
 - **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)**

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)

- **World's largest Health Insurance scheme:** It aims at **providing a health cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family** per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization to over 10.74 crores poor and vulnerable families that form the **bottom 40% of the Indian population.**
- **Identification of beneficiary households:** Based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011).
- **Cashless and paperless access to services:** For the beneficiary at the point of service in any (both public and private) empanelled hospitals across India.

- **Fully funded by the Government:** Cost of implementation is shared between the Central and State Governments.
- **Implementing agency:** National Health Authority (NHA).
- **Treatment for COVID-19** can be availed free of cost by eligible beneficiaries.

Significance of PMJAY

- **Help India progressively achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- **Ensure improved access and affordability** of quality secondary and tertiary care services.
- Significantly **reduce out of pocket expenditure for hospitalization**.
- **Strengthen public health care systems** through infusion of insurance revenues.
- Enable **creation of new health infrastructure** in rural, remote and under-served areas.
- **Improvement in population-level productivity** and efficiency thus leading to improvement in quality of life.

Issues with PMJAY

- **Absence of Private Healthcare Infrastructure:** Registry of Hospitals in Network of Insurance (ROHINI) data suggests that only 3% of private hospitals are eligible for the Ayushman Bharat scheme.
- **A Push towards the Privatisation of Healthcare:** Private sector is expected to provide all types of care and treatments while the government's role would be minimal, to provide financial protection.
- **Biased against poor states:** Poor states cannot provide for their share of funds (40% of the total expenditure), which keeps them deprived of the money allocated by the Union government.
- **Coverage of medicines post discharge up to 15 days only:** A large number of patients, particularly cancer patients, require long-term medication on an outpatient basis.
- **Unspent fund:** Allocation for the PM-JAY scheme has not increased because the Centre was unable to spend the allocated amount last year.
- **Corruption:** Profit motive and corruption at private hospitals emerge as an implementation challenge for the scheme.

Way forward

- **Exclude public hospitals from PMJAY** as services there are already free of cost.
- **Penalising unethical practice** in hospitals indulging in unethical practices
- **Continuous Quality Improvement efforts to be undertaken** in PM-JAY network hospitals.
- **Real time data should be available in the public domain** for researchers to analyse, and make recommendations to plug gaps in the scheme.

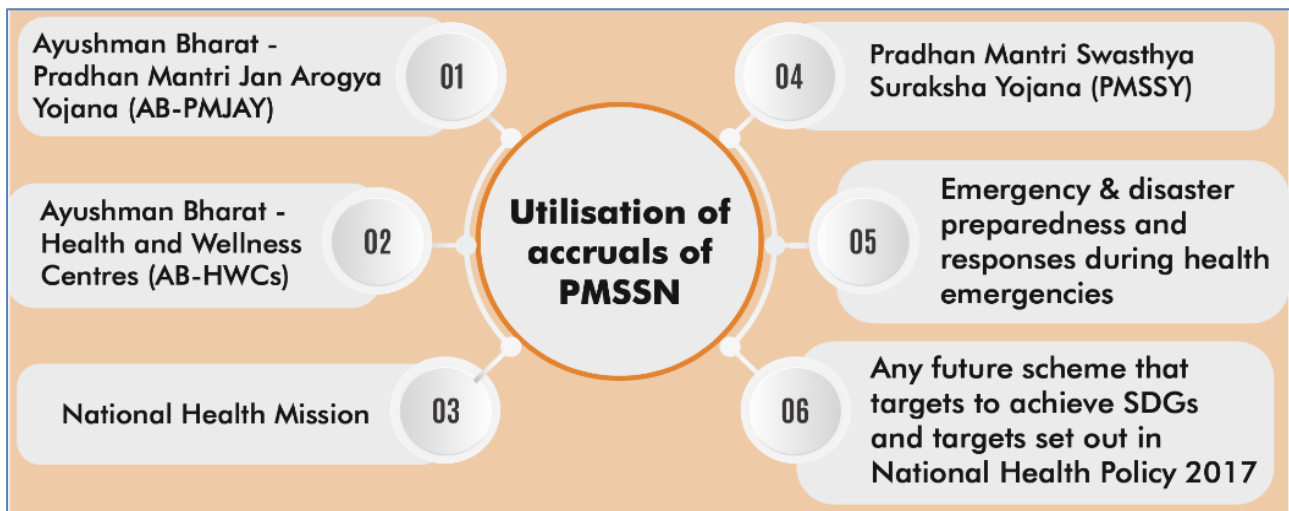
3.3.1. PRADHAN MANTRI SWASTHYA SURAKSHA NIDHI (PMSSN)

Why in news?

The Union Cabinet has approved the **Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSSN)**.

About PMSSN

- It is a **single non-lapsable reserve fund for Health expenditure** in the **Public Account of India**
- It is funded from the **proceeds of Health and Education cess (4%)** levied under Finance Act, 2007.
- **Administration and maintenance** of the PMSSN is entrusted to the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW)**.
- In any financial year, the **expenditure** on schemes of the MoHFW would be **initially incurred from the PMSSN and thereafter, from Gross Budgetary Support (GBS)**.
- **Benefits of PMSSN:** It will **enhance access to universal & affordable health care** through availability of earmarked resources.
 - With improved health conditions **one extra year of population life expectancy raises GDP per capita by 4%**.



3.4. NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION

Why in news?

Recently, the National Medical Commission (NMC) was constituted which replaces Medical Council of India (MCI).

About National Medical Commission (NMC)

- The NMC, recommended by Prof. Ranjit Roy Chaudhury committee (2015), has been set up under **National Medical Commission Act (NMC Act), 2019** which repealed the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956.
- **Composition:** NMC will consist of 25 members, appointed by the central government.
- **Functions of NMC**
 - framing policies for regulating medical institutions and medical professionals,
 - assessing the requirements of healthcare related human resources and infrastructure,
 - ensuring compliance by the State Medical Councils of the regulations made under the Act,
 - framing guidelines for determination of fees for up to 50% of the seats in private medical institutions and deemed universities which are regulated under the Act.
 - It **supervises following autonomous boards** setup under the Act.
 - **Under-Graduate Medical Education Board and Post-Graduate Medical Education Board** to set standards and regulate medical education.
 - **Medical Assessment and Rating Board** inspections and rating of medical institutions
 - **Ethics and Medical Registration Board** to regulate and promote professional conduct and medical ethics and also maintain national registers of (a) licensed medical practitioners and (b) Community Health Providers (CHPs).
 - NMC may grant a **limited license to certain mid-level practitioners** who may prescribe specified medicines in primary and preventive healthcare.

Positive aspects of NMC

- **Transparency:** Members of NMC will have to **declare their assets** while assuming and leaving the office. They will also have to submit a conflict-of-interest declaration
- **Independence in working:** NMC chairperson and other members nominated **cannot be renominated**. Members will have to **serve a two-year cooling-off period** after their tenure. This could be waived by the government if required.
- **Separation of functions:** Unlike MCI which has been criticised for concentration and centralisation of all regulatory functions in one single body, NMC has **four autonomous boards under it**.

Concerns with NMC

- **Less elected representatives:** only 20% members of the NMC will be elected representatives (Compared to the 70% in the MCI)
- **Greater control of executive:** While action could be taken against the MCI president only on the direction of a court, NMC Act **enables the central government to remove the chairperson or any other member of**

the NMC. Also, the Central government is the appellate authority for almost all decisions taken by the commission. Additionally, the Centre has the **power to give the commission and boards policy directions**.

- **Against federal setup:** NMC's ethics board exercises jurisdiction over state medical councils. Contrary to this MCI's decisions were not binding on state medical councils. Also, only few States in rotation will have representation.
- **Absence of diversity:** Two-thirds of the members in the NMC are medical practitioners. Thus, there might be a high influence of medical practitioners in regulating medical education and practice.
- **Fee regulation:** MCI had no powers to regulate fees. NMC will be "framing guidelines" for determining fees on 50% of seats in private colleges. NITI Aayog Committee (2016) was of the opinion that a **fee cap would discourage the entry of private colleges**, thus, limiting the expansion of medical education in the country.

Conclusion

Despite limitations, NMC is a step forward, considering MCI was grappling with allegations of corruption, opaque functioning, conflict of interest, lack of emphasis on medical ethics. Also, it failed to achieve the objective of ensuring adequate healthcare professionals and controlling cost of medical education. NMC is expected to **ensure probity in medical education, simplify procedures, enhance quality education and provide wider access** to people for quality healthcare.

3.5. COVID 19 AND MENTAL HEALTH

Why in news?

Widespread psychological distress has been recorded in various COVID-19 affected countries affecting overall mental health of the people.

How is COVID exacerbating the problem of mental illness?

- **Government policies:** Policies of social distancing, quarantines, travel restrictions, and cancellations of schools and large gatherings have sparked perpetual fear, panic, anxiety, confusion, anger and depression. People are afraid of infection, dying, and losing family members.
- **Economic factors:** People mainly in the unorganised sector are under constant fear of losing their businesses, jobs, or savings which has spiked the frustration, anxiety, distress level amongst them.
- **Social factors:**
 - **Stigma** against health care workers, people who tested positive, elderly and people with existing health conditions.
 - **Children and adolescents** are exacerbated by family stress, social isolation, with some facing increased abuse, disrupted education and uncertainty about their futures.
 - **Women:** As per a survey recorded by the UN, a large number of Indian women reported being stressed due to additional duties of care giver such as home-schooling and taking care of older relatives along with increased cases of violence towards them.
 - **Elderly and people with pre-existing health conditions** are currently extremely worried about being infected with the virus and not having access to appropriate care.
- **Role of media:** With repeated media images of severely ill people, dead bodies and coffins, frequent misinformation and rumours about the virus, people are developing knowledge that they may not have the opportunity to say goodbye to dying loved ones and may not be able to hold funerals for them.
- **Limited access to mental health care services:** India's formal mental health system has a limited number of specialists; 9,000 psychiatrists for 1.3 billion people.
- **Shortage of frontline workers: Police and healthcare workers** are faced with extreme workloads, difficult decisions, risks of becoming infected and spreading infection to families and communities and witnessing deaths of patients.

Mental Health

- WHO defines mental health as a **state of mental well-being** in which people cope well with the many stresses of life, can realize their own potential, can function productively and fruitfully, and are able to contribute to their communities.
- According to an estimate by the World Health Organization (WHO), **mental illness makes about 15% of the total disease conditions around the world**.
- A report by the Indian Council of Medical Research shows that **one of out every seven individuals** in India suffers from a mental health concern ranging from depression, anxiety to severe conditions such as schizophrenia. As a result, WHO has labelled India as the **world's 'most depressing country'**.

Implications

- **Psycho-Social impacts:**
 - To deal with the stressors, **people may resort to different negative ways of coping**, including use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco or spending more time on potentially addictive behaviours such as online gaming.
 - **Increased risks of discrimination and violence** related to gender, children and caste. These will be magnified by unemployment, malnourishment and poverty.
 - Increase in chronic stress, depression, alcohol dependence, and self-harm; leading to an **overall rise in morbidity, suicides and the number of disability-adjusted life years** linked to mental health.
- **Economic impacts:** Short-term costs include hospital expenses while long-term costs include the lost income that could have been earned by the person, tax that the government lost from that income, among other things.



Way forward

- **Sustaining and strengthening mental health services** and programmes must be a priority to address current and future mental health needs and help prevent a rise in mental ill health in the future.
- **Awareness generation:** Large public engagement campaign to increase help-seeking supported by state governments and endorsed by influential people.
 - Mainstream media and social media giants can be roped in to create and spread awareness.
- **Community-based interventions** such as **SCARF's mental health mobile vans** in Tamil Nadu, and **VISHRAM** in Vidarbha, that used community health workers for the first line of treatment can be scaled.
- **Policy interventions: Implementing the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, (MHCA)** that promises mental health care to all and **introduce a suicide prevention policy.**
- **Digitally mediated therapy and telepsychiatry** should be scaled up.

Initiative taken for mental health during COVID 19

- **WHO Department of Mental Health and Substance Use has issued guidelines** as a series of messages that can be used in communications to support mental and psychosocial well-being in different target groups during the outbreak.
- MoHFW also issued Guidelines **“Minding our minds during the COVID-19”** to deal with mental health issues.
 - **Do not follow sensational news or social media posts** which may impact your mental state.
 - **Feeling lonely or sad is also quite common. Stay connected with others.** Communication can help you to connect with family and friends.
 - **Distract yourself from negative emotions** by listening to music, reading, watching an entertaining programme on television
 - **Avoid tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.**
- **Manodarpan, an initiative by Ministry of Human Resource Development as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**, to provide psychological support and counselling to students, teachers and families for mental health and emotional well-being.

3.6. VACCINE HESITANCY

Why in news?

Recently, in a study published in The Lancet, **India ranked the highest among countries where people believed vaccines to be effective with 84.26%** believing so in 2019.

About Vaccine Hesitancy

- **Definition:** As per **WHO**, Vaccine Hesitancy is defined as “reluctance or refusal to vaccinate despite the availability of vaccines”. It is influenced by factors such as complacency, convenience and confidence.

- **Current status:** In January 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) listed vaccine hesitancy as among the **top 10 threats to global health**. The trend of **vaccine hesitancy has increased** in many countries between 2015 and 2019.
- **Implications:**
 - **Some deadly diseases are making a comeback**, decades after scientists had largely eliminated them with vaccines. For example, recent outbreaks of the oldest vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, pertussis, diphtheria and polio.
 - There were **risks of vaccines against COVID-19 never reaching their potential**.

Factors fueling Vaccine Hesitancy in India

- **Lack of parental consent before vaccinating children** at schools One major objection is.
- **Post-immunization adverse events**, especially the rare occurrence of a child's death, trigger apprehensions about vaccine quality and safety.
- **Reduced community trust** due to inadequacy and inequities of the public health system.
- **Religious suspicions and rumors** cause mass community resistance.

Measures needed to tackle Vaccine Hesitancy

- **Research:** For systematic assessment of the factors affecting uptake.
- **Address misinformation:** Mass campaign through social media, big personalities, local leaders, etc. could be used.
- **Communities:** Communities need to be at the centre of drives to improve the quality of immunization and health services, access and equity.
- **Communication:** Interventions should be dialogue based and directly targeted to a specific under-vaccinated population group.
- **Collaboration:** Engaging collaboratively with health workers, caregivers/parents, and their families and communities, one can generate the insights to develop better quality health services.

3.7. MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2021

Why in news?

Recently, parliament has passed the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) (Amendment) Act, 2021.

About MTP Act, 2021

- The bill seeks to **amend Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971** to regulate the conditions under which a pregnancy may be aborted and increases the time period within which abortion may be carried out.
- The Bill decides to set up state level **Medical Boards to decide if a pregnancy may be terminated after 24 weeks** in cases of substantial fetal abnormalities.

Comparison between MTP Act, 1971 and MTP (Amendment) Act, 2021

Features	MTP Act, 1971	MTP (Amendment) Act, 2021
Time upto 12 weeks since conception	• Advice of one doctor	• Advice of one doctor
Time 12 to 20 weeks since conception	• Advice of two doctors	• Advice of one doctor
Time 20 to 24 weeks since conception	• Not allowed	• Two doctors for some categories of pregnant women
Time more than 24 weeks since conception	• Not allowed	• Medical Board in case of substantial foetal abnormality
Any time during the pregnancy	• One doctor , if immediately necessary to save pregnant woman's life, opinion formed in good faith .	• One doctor , if immediately necessary to save pregnant woman's life, opinion formed in good faith .
Termination due to failure of contraceptive method or device	• pregnancy may be terminated up to 20 weeks by a married woman	• The amendment act allows unmarried women to also terminate a pregnancy for this reason.

Medical Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No such provision, only registered medical practitioners can decide upon termination of pregnancy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Board will decide if a pregnancy may be terminated after 24 weeks due to substantial foetal abnormalities. All state and union territory governments will constitute a Medical Board consisting of gynecologists, pediatrician, radiologist/sonologist, and other members notified by the state government.
Privacy and punishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any person who wilfully contravenes or wilfully fails to comply with the requirements of any regulation shall be liable to be punished with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A registered medical practitioner may only reveal the details of a woman whose pregnancy has been terminated to a person authorised by law. Violation is punishable with imprisonment up to a year, a fine, or both.

Significance of MTP (Amendment) Act, 2021

- Women's autonomy:** It provides **safe, affordable, accessible abortion services to women** if substantial foetal anomalies detected late in pregnancy and pregnancies due to sexual violence faced by women.
- Reduce maternal mortality and morbidity:** It increases access of women to legal and safe abortion service in order to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity caused by unsafe abortion and its complications.
- Leveraging advancement of medical technology for safe abortion:** Thus, there is a scope for increasing upper gestational limit for terminating pregnancies.

Issues with MTP (Amendment) Act, 2021

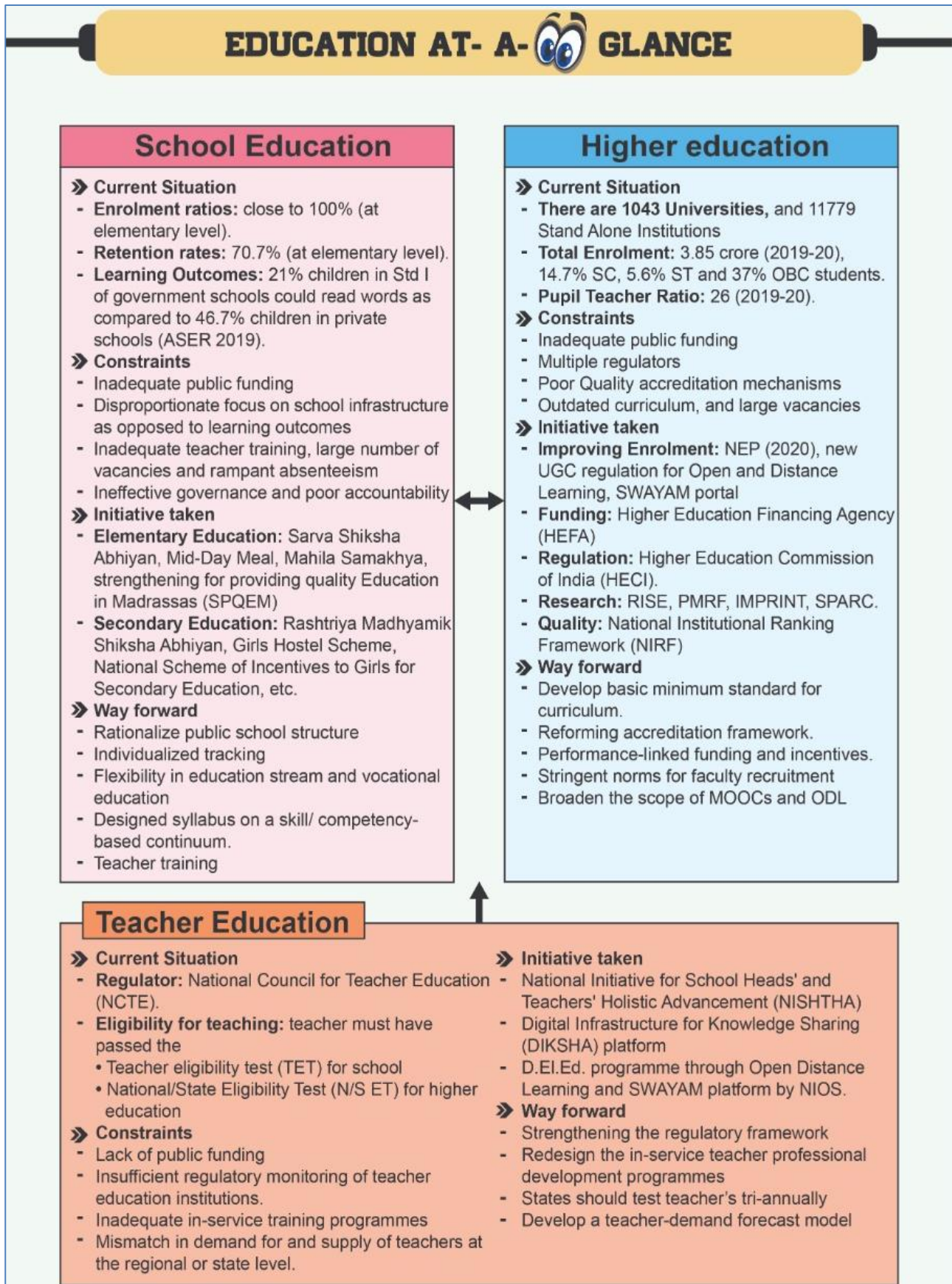
- No freedom of decision making to women:** As women will need a nod from a medical board in the case of pregnancies **beyond 24 weeks.**
- Time frame for Medical Board's decision not specified:** The Bill does not provide a time frame within which the Board must make its decision for termination of pregnancy after 24 weeks.
- Categories of women who can terminate pregnancy between 20-24 weeks not specified:** This category is not specified in the bill, while it is delegated to the central government to notify these categories.
- Non-availability of qualified medical professionals to terminate pregnancies:** There is a 75% shortage of qualified doctors.
- No clarity about transgender persons:** Some medical studies have shown that there may be cases where persons who identify as transgender (and not women) can become pregnant even after receiving hormone therapy.

Way forward

- Law on categories of women:** Women who can terminate pregnancy between 20-24 weeks should be specified by Parliament by law.
- Time frame for Medical Board:** There should be a definite time period for decisions by the medical board for termination of pregnancy after 24 weeks, to avoid delays and check complications for the pregnant woman.
- Transgender persons:** There is need to cover transgender persons under the Bill.

4. EDUCATION

4.1. EDUCATION SYSTEM



4.2. NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

Why in news?

India completed one year of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**.

NEP, 2021 AT- A- GLANCE

ABOUT NEP, 2021

- It replaces the **NEP, 1986**.
- Envisages an education system that contributes to an **equitable and vibrant knowledge society**.
- Public investment- **6% of GDP**.
- **100% youth and adult literacy**.
- Promotion and support for private **philanthropic activity** in education sector
- **National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)** to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology
- Comprehensive set of recommendations for **promoting online education**
- Promotion of **Indian Languages, Arts, and Culture**

SCHOOL EDUCATION

- **Restructuring school curriculum** and pedagogy in a new **5+3+3+4** design covering ages of 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, 14-18 respectively.
- Attainment of **100% GER in preschool to secondary level by 2030**.
- **Three languages formula** with greater flexibility.
- **Gender Inclusion Fund** for female and transgender students
- Special Education Zones (**SEZs**) for **Socio-Economically Disadvantaged groups (SEDGs)**
- National Curriculum Framework for **Teacher Education**
- The **twinning/pairing** of one public school with one private school
- **Same criteria** for assessing **Public and private school**
- National Assessment Centre- **PARAKH**
- **National Testing Agency (NTA)** to serve as an autonomous testing for entrance examinations for higher education institutions.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- Three types of institutions: **Research Universities, Teaching Universities, Autonomous degree-granting colleges**
- All professional education will be an integral part of the higher education system.
- **Academic Bank of Credit** for **digitally storing academic credits**
- **Higher Education Commission of India (HECI)** will be the **single overarching umbrella regulatory body**
- Earmark **suitable Government funds** for the education of **SEDGs**
- **Research collaboration and student exchanges** between Indian and global institutions
- **High performing Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries**

More on news

The Prime Minister launched multiple key initiatives in the education sector to mark the first year anniversary of the National Education Policy 2020. These are as given under:

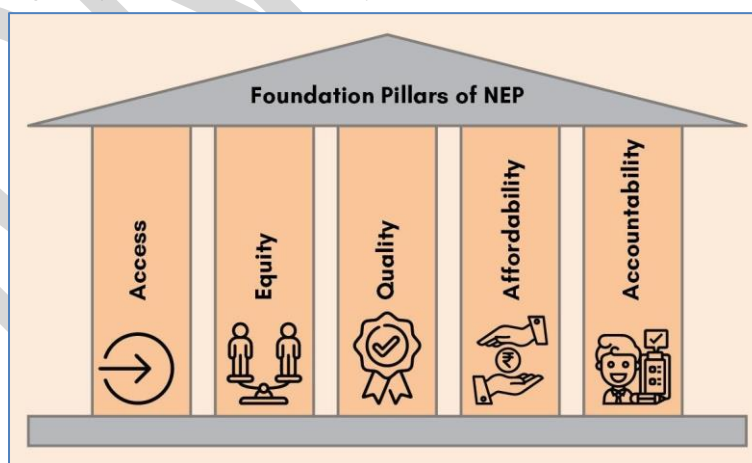
Initiative	Details
Academic Bank of Credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is envisaged as a digital bank that shall deposit Credits awarded by Registered Higher Education Institutions, for Courses pursued therein, in the Academic Bank Account of the student. It is a major instrument for facilitating multidisciplinary and holistic education.
Vidya Pravesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a preschool preparation programme for Class 1st students.
SAFAL (Structured Assessment For Analyzing Learning Levels)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An assessment programme for CBSE students to assess the progress of foundational skills and basic learning outcomes and competencies among students in classes 3, 5 and 8.
National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will provide diverse education eco-system architecture for development of digital infrastructure.
National Education Technology Forum (NETF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will provide independent evidence-based advice to central and state government agencies on technology-based interventions.
NISHTHA 2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will provide training to teachers as per their needs and they will be able to give their suggestions to the department.
Other initiatives related to language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mother tongue as medium of instruction in colleges: 14 engineering colleges in eight States are going to start engineering studies in five Indian languages: Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Bangla. Sign Language as a Subject in Secondary Level: This will give a boost to Indian sign language and will help the divyang people.

Background: About NEP, 2020

- The NEP, was launched as the **guiding philosophy for changing the learning landscape**, making education holistic and for building strong foundations for an Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- This is the **first education policy of the 21st century** and replaces the NPE, 1986.
- The policy is **aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and aims to **transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower** by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, suited to 21st century needs.

Implementation Challenges & Issues with the NEP 2020

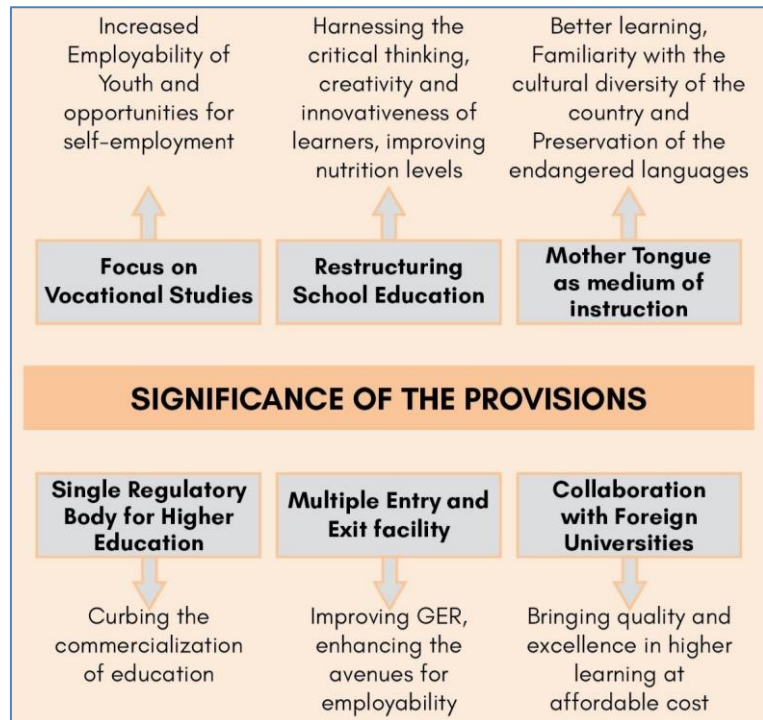
- Funding:** NEP talks about spending 6% of GDP on education. However, it does not elaborate how to raise this fund.
- Multilingualism:** With inter-state migration for employment, and India's large diversity of languages, regional language will **hobble some students' learning**.
- Vocational Education:** Stress on vocational training from the preparatory stage, many fear, would lead to students from marginalized backgrounds dropping out early to take up jobs.
- Legal complexities:** The policy has also been criticised due to the legal complexities surrounding the applicability of **two operative policies namely The Right to Education Act, 2009 and the National Education Policy, 2020**. Certain provisions such as the age of starting schooling will need to be deliberated upon, to resolve any conundrum between the statute and the recently introduced policy in the longer run.
- Education is a concurrent subject:** Hence, any educational reform can be implemented only with support from the States, and the Centre has the giant task of building a consensus on the many ambitious plans.
- Fear of Commercialisation and privatisation of education:**
 - The NEP suggests that admission to all higher education programmes should be based on standardised test scores conducted by the National Testing Authority. This **may encourage coaching classes and rote memorisation**, further eroding the value of examinations and assessments conducted by the schools, colleges, and universities.
 - Fear of Privatisation:** Many experts argue that NEP, in the name of philanthropic schools and PPP, is laying the roadmap for entry of private players in education, which will further commercialise education and the existing inequalities will be exacerbated.



- **Lack of adequate resources:** Experiential learning, for instance, through project work requires significant financial resources for procuring project materials and setting up tinkering labs. Such activities also need more and good quality teachers, while the school systems presently face chronic and persistent teacher shortages.

Way Forward

- **Cooperative federalism:** The **Ministry of Education and Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) need to work in tandem with the states** and the educational institutes by collaboratively setting realistic and achievable targets and by tracking progress against critical policy priorities.
- **Setting the right priorities:** Centre and States both must ensure that priorities should be based on both the short- term and long-term needs of educational institutes, funding requirements and realistic deadlines for achieving the set goals.
- **Attitudinal changes:** Many of the changes that NEP sets out to achieve require **attitudinal changes** by adopting effective teaching-learning processes, academic and administrative procedures.
- **Effective implementation:** Distinctly outlining the chain of command for implementation to avoid duplication and overlap of efforts. Also, define the key performance indicators, for officials and other stakeholders and carry out a **periodic review of their performance indicators.**



Conclusion

The NEP, 2020, is a guiding philosophy for changing the learning landscape, making education holistic and for building strong foundations for an Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

4.2.1. STRENGTHENING TEACHING-LEARNING AND RESULTS FOR STATES (STARS) PROJECT

Why in news?

The Union Cabinet approved the **STARS project** partially funded by the World Bank under the new National Education Policy (NEP) to support states in strengthening the school education system.

About STARS project

- It would be implemented as a **new Centrally Sponsored Scheme** under Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education (MOE).
- It seeks to **support the states in developing, implementing, evaluating and improving interventions** with direct linkages to improved education outcomes and school to work transition strategies for improved labour market outcomes.
- The overall focus and components of the STARS project are **aligned with the objectives of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of Quality Based Learning Outcomes.**
- The **project covers 6 States:** Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha.
 - Besides this project, it is also envisaged to implement a similar ADB funded project in 5 states namely Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Assam. All states will partner with one other state for sharing their experiences and best practices.
- It also aims to **focus on initiatives of PM e-Vidya, Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission and National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education** as part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

- It will supply multi-year financing for India's participation in **Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2021**.

It has two major components	
At the national level	At the national level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen MOE's national data systems to capture robust and authentic data on retention, transition and completion rates of students. Support MOE in improving states Performance Grading Index (PGI) scores by incentivizing states governance reform agenda through SIG (State Incentive Grants). Support MOE's efforts to establish a National Assessment Centre – PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development). Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) which would enable it to be more responsive to any natural, man-made and health disasters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening Early Childhood Education and Foundational Learning. Improving Learning Assessment Systems. Strengthening Vocational education in schools through mainstreaming, career guidance and counselling, internships and coverage of out of school children.

4.3. HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Why in news?

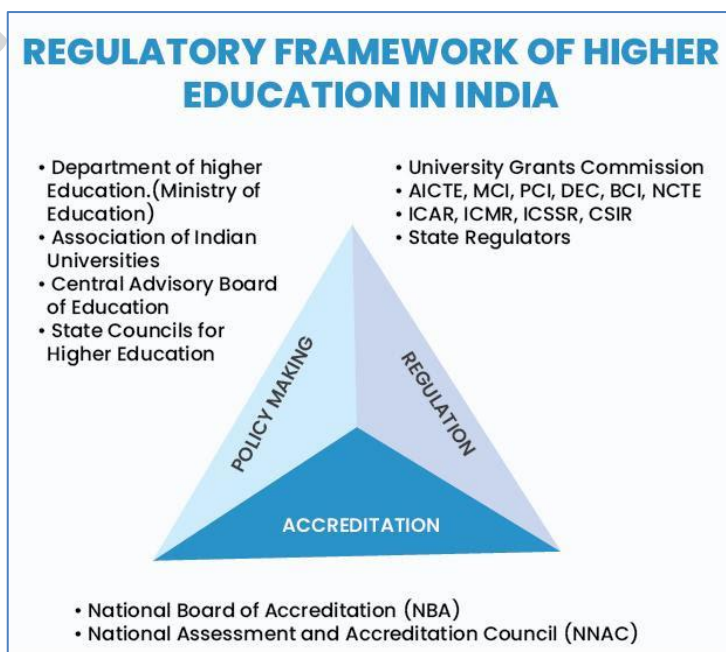
Recently, the Ministry of Education released **All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) report** for the year 2019-20.

About AISHE

- All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) is an **annual web-based survey** conducted since 2010-11 by the erstwhile Ministry of Education **portraying the status of higher education in the country**.
- The survey is being **conducted under** the central sector scheme **Higher Education Statistics and Public Information System (HESPIS)**.
- Survey covers all higher education institutions in the country, which are **50 categorized into 3 broad categories: Universities, Colleges/Institutions, Stand-alone Institutions** (not affiliated with Universities and are not empowered to provide degrees, therefore run Diploma Level Programmes.)

Challenges with regard to higher education in India

- Low student enrolment in comparison to the developed and other developing countries:** GER in higher/tertiary education is more than 88% in US, 54% in China and 51% in Brazil. Low GER **creates a bottleneck in achieving massification of higher education in India** (making higher education as a right for those with certain formal qualifications).
- Low GER in India is **primarily because of shortage of educationally eligible population for enrolment in higher education**.
- Social Inequity:** The inequality in access to HE also varies considerably between rural and urban regions with under-representation of marginalised sections such as SC, ST and minorities.
- Shortage of resources for state universities:** Nearly, 65% of the University Grants Commission (UGC) budget is utilised by the central universities.
- Poor Employability:** India Skills Report 2021 finds that employability across disciplines is at 45%.
- Quality of institutions:** Only 14% of all HEIs in India have valid NAAC accreditation and only three universities from India rank in the top-200 positions in the latest QS World University Rankings 2022.



- **Faculty shortages** along with the inability of the state educational system to attract and retain well-qualified teachers.
- **Suboptimal research ecosystem:** India's gross expenditure on R&D is 0.65% of its GDP, significantly lower than the 1.5-3% of GDP spent by the top 10 economies.
- **Governance and Accountability:** The Higher education system is marked by over-centralization, bureaucratic structures and lack of accountability, transparency, and professionalism.
- **COVID implications:** Covid-19 has created several negative impacts on higher education such as passive learning, unprepared teachers for virtual class, altering structure of student enrolment, increased unemployment due to delays in exam and getting degree certificates.
 - It also **highlighted the challenge of prevailing digital divide** resulting in lack of student involvement during the online classes, increased absenteeism and poor performance.
 - The health crisis combined with a recession **increases the probability of families deciding to forgo higher education** entirely or defer enrolment.

Major initiatives by the government for higher education sector

- **Improving Student Enrolment:**
 - **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** aims at increasing the GER in higher education to 50% by 2035.
 - **New UGC regulation for Open and Distance Learning** that allows entry of reputed institutions to offer education on the distance mode.
 - **SWAYAM portal** to reach out to people and allow them to secure good quality education.
- **Addressing Funding requirements:**
 - **Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), 2013** aims at financing state institutions with respect to their governance and performance.
 - **Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA), 2018**, a joint venture of MoE and Canara Bank aims to leverage funds from the market, donations and CSR funds to be used to finance improvement in infrastructure in top institutions.
 - **Better regulation of HEIs: Higher Education Commission of India (HECI)** was proposed to act as an overarching regulator of higher education by replacing UGC or AITCE.
- **Revitalising Research Ecosystem:**
 - **Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) scheme** funded by HEFA aims at Increased investments in research and related infrastructure in premier educational institutions.
 - **Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF) Scheme** to enhance the quality of technical research.
 - **IMPRINT (IMPActing Research INnovation and Technology) India**, Joint initiative of IITs and IISc to boost original scientific and technological research.
 - **Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)** aims at improving the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian institutions and the best institutions in the world.
- **Improving quality of HEIs:**
 - **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2015**, a methodology adopted by the MoE to rank higher education institutions in India in order to encourage institutes to compete against each other and simultaneously work towards their growth.
 - ✓ NIRF is also one of the criterias for private institutions assessment for the **Institutions of Eminence (IoE) Scheme** that provide the regulatory architecture for setting up or upgrading of 20 Institutions (10 from public sector and 10 from the private sector) as world-class teaching and research institutions.
 - **Mandatory Assessments:** The UGC has made NAAC assessments compulsory for all HEIs that apply for funding and the AICTE recently announced that at least half the programmes run by an HEI must be accredited by the NBA.

Way ahead

- **Adoption of blended learning:** Covid-19 pandemic has stressed the need for the adoption of blended learning synchronising both classroom learning and online teaching in the post-COVID era.
- **Investments in education sector:** Distance learning programs and online learning solutions are expected to create a US\$2 billion market in India by 2021. Foreign institutions can collaborate with Indian businesses in this subsector to leverage the global market.
- **Making Teaching an attractive and lucrative career:** By devising a well-structured promotion policy and incentive plan for faculty to attract and retain qualified faculty.
- **Industry-academia linkage:** Introducing vocational courses, mandatory internships and ensuring that curriculum taught in colleges remains relevant to the requirements of industry and adds to the employability of youth.

- **Redefining Enrolment Indicator:** The researchers have suggested that instead of GER, India should look at Eligibility Enrolment Ratio (EER), which is the ratio of eligible population — those who have at least passed Class 12 in the 18-23 age group — to the number of people attending college. EER **would ensure a change in education pedagogy in India**, with efforts to improve the quality of school education and give more importance to skill and vocational training.
- **Upgrading accreditation capacity:** There is a need for more players in the sector as NAAC does not have the capacity to assess all the HEIs in India. Clustering HEIs will enable close scrutiny and help make them more manageable thus leading to upgradation in quality.

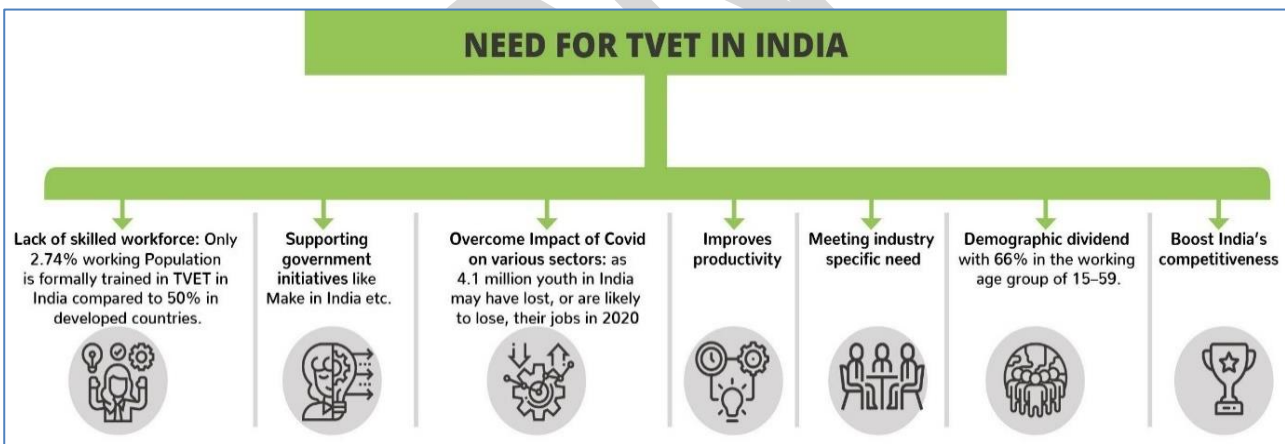
4.4. TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)

Why in News?

State of Education Report 2020: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) was released by UNESCO.

About the report

- Report **focuses on TVET and aims to support India** which has already announced skills development as a key national priority under the Skill India Mission.
- It **focuses on highlighting progress and achievements**, describing the intense on-going activity around TVET provision, and **outlining the directions for future growth** through the implementation of the new NEP 2020.
- Report highlights the **Vision for quality TVET** which is also included in India’s new National Education Policy 2020 requiring all educational institutions to integrate vocational education into their offerings.
- **Current status of TVET provision**
 - More than 1,000 colleges are presently running the special undergraduate Bachelor of Vocation.
 - Around 10,158 state-government-run schools that offer vocational education to over 1.2 million students.



Challenges faced in scaling TVET in India

- **Negative perception:** Among students and parents, there is perception that **TVET is inferior to regular school and college education**, and that it is suitable only for those youth who are unable to cope with mainstream education.
- **TVET is not benefiting youth:** Because youth are mobilized for these courses but not given adequate information and exposure to the job role and occupation they are about to be trained for.
- **Lack of data on actual skill:** In order to improve the employability of youth in rural areas, skills gap analysis needs to be conducted at a much more granular manner, down to the Panchayat level.
- **Poor service conditions for trainers:** Trainer faces issues like relatively low wages, irregular salary payments, a lack of social security and other benefits, and poor career prospects.
- **Digital divide:** That has been brought to the fore by the pandemic is a serious challenge to the spread of digital TVET in India.
- **Low women participation:** The participation of women in the labour force is very low, just under 26.5% and women also face significant income inequality.

Steps that can be taken to achieve vision of TVET

- **Place learners and their aspirations at the centre of TVET:** Vocational aptitude tests coupled with career counselling and guidance need to be made available to all learners.
- **Conducive environment teachers, trainers and assessors:** Proper induction training, better terms of recruitment and deployment, working conditions and career prospects, etc.
- **Making TVET inclusive:** Ensure inclusive access to TVET for women, persons with disabilities, and other disadvantaged learners.
- **Align TVET with 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:** by creation of new and relevant TVET programmes in many areas of strategic importance to India such as water management and sanitation, clean energy, climate change and sustainability, among many others.

4.5. LEARNING POVERTY

Why in News?

Recently, the World Bank released a report titled “Realizing the Future of Learning: From learning poverty to learning for everyone, everywhere”.

What is Learning Poverty?

- **Definition:** Learning Poverty is defined as the **percentage of 10-year-olds who cannot read and understand a simple story.**
- **Current status:** As per World Bank estimates, more than half (53%) of 10-year-old children in low- and middle-income countries either had failed to read with comprehension or were out of school entirely.
- **Steps taken to improve foundational learning:** The World Bank has also launched a global target: to **cut the Learning Poverty rate—at least in half by 2030.**

How is the Pandemic exacerbating learning Poverty?

- Pandemic has brought twin shocks to education—**massive school closures and an ensuing deep economic recession**—that threaten to exacerbate the learning crisis, especially for the poor.
- In the most pessimistic scenario, COVID-related school closures could increase the learning poverty rate in the low- and middle-income countries **by 10 percentage points, from 53% to 63%.**
- This 10-percentage-point increase in learning poverty implies **that an additional 72 million primary-school-age children could fall into learning poverty**, out of a population of 720 million children of primary-school age.

Core Principles to Guide Reform Efforts Toward the Vision for the Future of Learning



Pursue **systemic reform** supported by political commitment to learning for all children



Focus on equity and inclusion, and equity, through a progressive path towards universalism



Focus on results and use evidence to keep improving policy



Ensure **financial commitment** that is commensurate with what is needed



Invest wisely in **technology**

What are the key policy actions for various stakeholders in improving learning?

Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase provision of high-quality early childhood development services by making holistic, cross-sectoral investments in child development from the earliest days of life. • Remove demand-side barriers to getting all children into school by eliminating financial and material barriers. • Create conditions for learning to occur with joy, purpose, and rigor to keep children in school by emphasizing foundational learning before expecting learners to progress to higher levels of schooling. • Bolster the role of the family and communities in learning and improve learning environments outside of school, particularly at home.
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reshape the teaching profession as a meritocratic, socially valued career and hold teachers to high professional standards. • Expand engagement in pre-service training (at teacher training institutes, normal schools, and universities), with an emphasis on the practicum component. • Invest in in-service teacher professional development that is on-going, tailored, focused, and practical. • Provide teachers with tools and techniques for effective teaching.
Learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the curriculum is effective (adjusted to the level of the students and the capacity of the system) and provide detailed guidance to teachers through highly structured lesson plans. • Use assessments judiciously. • Ensuring high-quality, age-appropriate books for children. • Ensure that learners, teachers, and school leaders can access and effectively harness technology to achieve learning objectives.
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all children and youth have a space to learn that meets minimum infrastructure standards for safety and inclusion. • Create conditions to prevent and address bullying and any form of discrimination and violence in and around the school. • Make schools inclusive so that all learners (including those with disabilities) feel welcome, have access, and can participate in quality learning experiences. • Teach students first in the language they use and understand.
System Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen human resource function of education systems to professionalize school leadership. • Provide tools to school leaders to manage with autonomy. • Invest in system leadership and management capacity to support schools.

4.5.1. NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR PROFICIENCY IN READING WITH UNDERSTANDING AND NUMERACY (NIPUN BHARAT)

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Education (MoE) launched the NIPUN Bharat programme, a **National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN)**.

More on News

- The Mission will be **set up under the aegis of the centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha** which is an integrated scheme of school education covering from Preschool to Senior Secondary level.

About NIPUN

Aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission aims to ensure universal acquisition of FLN, so that by 2026-27 every child achieves the desired learning competencies in reading, writing and numeracy at the end of Grade III and not later than Grade V.
Focus of the Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing access and retaining children in foundational years of schooling; • Teacher capacity building; • Development of high quality and diversified Student and Teacher Resources/Learning Materials; and • Tracking the progress of each child in achieving learning outcomes.
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A five-tier Implementation mechanism will be set up at National-State-District-Block-School level. • Department of School Education and Literacy, MoE will be the implementing agency at the national level and will be headed by a Mission Director. • Role of States/UTs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creating multi-year Action plans to achieve their respective FLN targets. ○ Contextualise the National Mission by preparing state specific Stage-wise Action Plan. ○ Ensure availability of adequate number of Teachers in each school at each grade from pre-primary to grade 3 and extensive capacity building of teachers for implementing FLN in mission mode. ○ Mapping of database of each child enrolled in foundational grades. ○ Identify a pool of mentors to render academic support to teachers. ○ Ensuring delivery of textbooks and uniforms to students before the start of academic session. ○ School/public libraries will be made integral part of teaching learning process.
Progress Tracking Mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning outcomes have been divided into 3 three developmental goals: Goal 1-HW (Health and Wellbeing), Goal 2-EC (Effective Communicators), Goal 3-IL (Involved Learners). ● Goals are set in the form of “Lakshya Soochi” or Targets for FLN (Refer infographic)
Strategies outlined for success of the mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pedagogy for creating an inclusive classroom by contextualization of materials keeping in view the linguistic and social diversity of each State/UT.. ● Empowering Teachers: Around 25 lakh teachers of pre-primary to primary grade will be trained this year through a special package for FLN under NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads" and Teachers" Holistic Advancement). ● Using DIKSHA (offers teachers, students and parents engaging learning material relevant to the prescribed school curriculum).

4.6. DIGITAL DIVIDE IN EDUCATION SECTOR

Why in news?

The Prime Minister, on the occasion of ‘shikshak parv’, launched various initiatives to modernise the education sector.

More on news

- The ‘shikshak parv’ was being observed **to recognise the contributions of teachers.**
 - The theme of "Shikshak Parv-2021" is “Quality and Sustainable Schools: Learnings from Schools in India”.
- **Key initiatives launched are**
 - **Vidyanjali 2.0 portal:** It will facilitate donations, contributions from Corporate Social Responsibility funds, and volunteering, all aimed at developing and improving schools.
 - **School Quality Assurance and Assessment Framework (S.Q.A.A.F) of CBSE:** to provide global parameters of attainment as standards for dimensions like curricula, pedagogy, assessment, infrastructure, inclusive practices and governance process in schools affiliated to it.
 - **Educational tools for the differently abled:** Indian Sign Language Dictionary (audio and text embedded sign language video for the hearing impaired, in conformity with Universal Design of Learning) and talking Books (audio books for the visually impaired).
 - **NISHTHA 2.0 teachers' training programme** for NIPUN Bharat.
 - National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) 2021 **and National Education Technology Forum (NETF)** for providing a digital and technological framework to the entire country.
 - **NDEAR 2021 outlines the framework to energize and catalyse the digital education** ecosystem to create and deliver diverse, relevant, contextual, innovative solutions that benefit the student, parent, teacher and educational communities.
 - **DEAR will act as a ‘super connect’ between various academic activities** in the same way as the UPI interface revolutionised the banking sector.

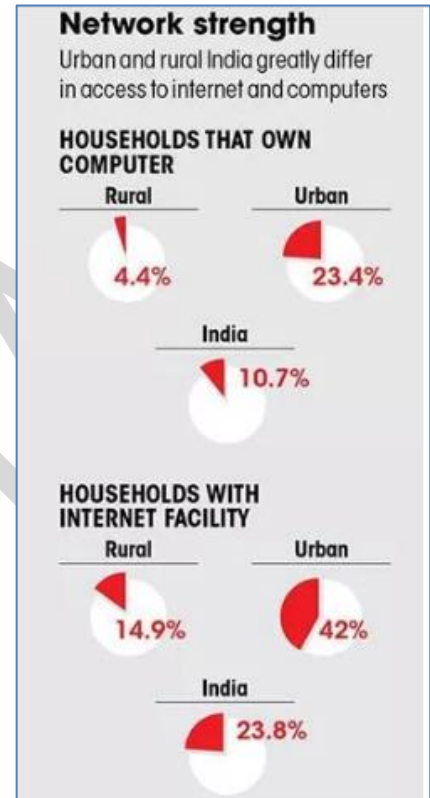
Digital education or e learning

- Digital education is the innovative **incorporation of modern technology and digital tools to assist the progress of teaching and learning.** It is also known as Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), digital learning, or e-learning.
- The concept of digital learning is not new and has existed in various forms for many years now, but when **the COVID-19 pandemic suspended face-to-face teaching its significance increased manifold.**
- With the **internet penetration rate** estimated to reach **above 55% by the end of 2025** in India, **digitisation of education** remains one of the **topmost priorities of our government.**

Advantages of digital education		
Enhanced penetration of education	Circumvents legacy problems	Enhanced employability
Allows educational institutes to offer a greater variety of courses to more students and to provide them with a level of support that was not always possible with in-class teaching.	Helping teachers connect with several students spread across several locations simultaneously. Thus, providing a great solution to the shortage of teachers in the country.	Online learning empowers institutions to engage with other institutions or third-party providers so they can offer courses that were previously not taught by their own faculty. Thus, it also provides the opportunity to make students industry ready.

Digital divide in education sector

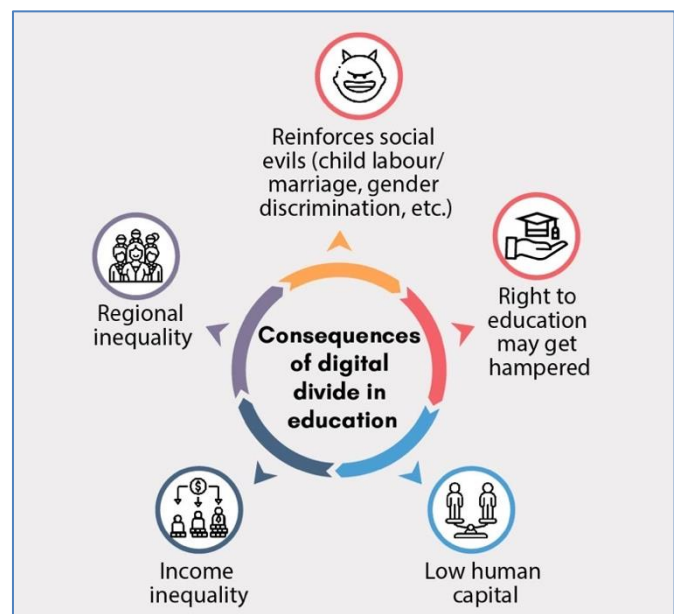
- Digital divide refers to the gap between those with regular, effective access to digital and information technology, and those without this access.
 - It encompasses both physical access to technology hardware and, more broadly, skills and resources which allow for its use.
 - Factors like gender, physical disability, physical access, age, access to the contents, and lack of ICT skills contribute to the digital divide.
- Covid-19 and digital divide**
 - India has the world's largest education system with over 250 million students enrolled in some 1.5 million schools and another 37.4 million students enrolled in approximately 50,000 Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs).
 - According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2020, only one third of India's school children are pursuing online education and a smaller cohort of 32.5% are doing live online classes.
 - Also, according to a recent survey (supervised by economist Jean Dreze), the reach of online education is "very limited". The urban-rural divide is stark, with 24% of urban students studying regularly online while this figure for rural students was a mere 8%.



- With 68% of India's population living in rural areas the stark gaps in access and the ability to use technology for learning will have profound effects on the development of students from these areas and will impact the nation's development too.

Challenges in bridging the digital divide in education sector

- Accessibility:** Intermittent electricity supply, digital divide due to gender biased society and economic disparity, among others.
- Language barriers:** Today, a large percentage of information content on the Internet is in English, which is a barrier for the people whose primary language is not English.
- Operational burden:** e-learning does not accommodate one-to-one discussions or problem solving with tutors. Also, teachers and institutions are not always trained and equipped to transition to online teaching.
- Lack of evidence on the usability of digital content:** Although a lot of digital content has been generated and transmitted to help children continue to learn, there is limited evidence on the extent to which this content is reaching children.



- **Reverse migration fueled by Covid-19 pandemic:** The pandemic and lockdown have affected 1.4m migrant workers who have either moved back home along with their children or are unable to send remittances home this season. In such a situation, the emphasis on technology-driven education is preventing many children in the country from continuing school education.

Way ahead

- **Library of e-gadgets:** The government should develop libraries for economically weaker students from where they can borrow gadgets and later return them.
 - In **Purnea**, one of the least literate districts in Bihar, the drive called **'Abhiyaan Kitab-Daan'** invited people from across the country to donate books. A total of 1.26 lakh books were collected through this initiative. **This model could be emulated for opening a library of e gadgets also.**
- **Collaboration at grassroots:** Panchayats and communities should create groups in villages where they can be given tablets with the study material in it without requiring the internet.
- **Ensuring affordable data pack:** The government can help students with free data packs to study. Community servers can be created for students who can download content from these networks
- **Financial inclusion:** Enabling access to affordable financial products and services, such as banks, savings accounts and credit will be key for the financial empowerment of the most marginalized communities. This in turn would help them ensure better facilities for accessing digital education by their wards.
- **National Broadband Mission:** It aims to provide broadband to all villages in India by 2022. This is a welcome step towards digital inclusion but the need is to ensure last-mile connectivity and ownership of digital devices for accessing the content.
- **Indigenisation of digital equipment industry:** India can harness this opportunity by manufacturing digital equipment that can be used for education services as it serves the twin purpose of indigenous manufacturing and bridging the digital divide.

Steps taken to bridge the digital divide in education sector

- **E-PATHSHALA:** This initiative allows the students, especially in rural areas to avail themselves of access to a plethora of study materials.
- **DIGITAL INDIA CAMPAIGN:** The campaign enables the availability of enhanced online infrastructure by prioritizing Internet connectivity and speed for transforming India into a digitally empowered country with the blessing of advanced technological accessibility.
- **COMMON SERVICE CENTERS (CSC):** Establishing advanced infrastructure by the Government of India allows the population to experience digital reach, even from unreachable areas.
- **OPTICAL FIBRE NETWORK:** This initiative allows the population of India to ensure faster broadband connectivity.
- **PM DIKSHA:** DIKSHA SERVES AS NATIONAL DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TEACHERS AND MOST OF THE MODERN TEACHERS ARE HAVING DIGITAL KNOWLEDGE.
- **PMGDISHA:** 'Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan' (PMGDISHA) was launched in 2017 to make 6 crore rural households digitally literate.

Conclusion

The scope of e-learning is enormous and can help realize the potential of each student. There lie both opportunities and challenges for the government and the private sector. The aim should be to ensure equal and adequate access to such platforms as the country continues to globalize and catch up with advanced economies. If the Indian education system aims to transition to online learning in the future, it must emphasize policies that bridge the digital divide and move the country closer to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

4.7. PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION SYSTEM

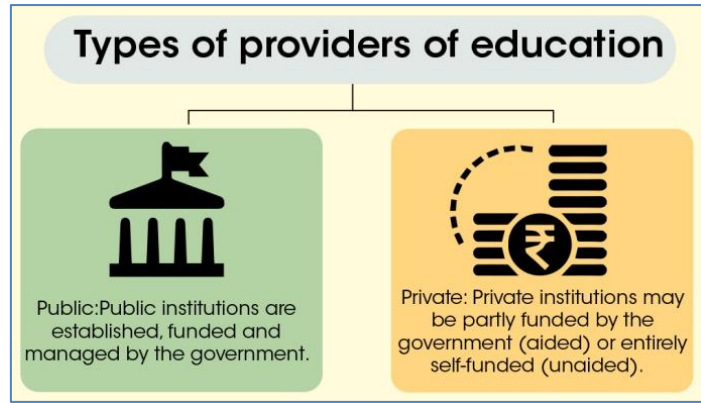
Why in news?

Recently, the Prime Minister called upon the private sector to come forward and contribute their bit in the educational sector.

Private players in Education sector

- Private providers of education often step in when the government has limited resources to provide universal access to education.
- In most markets, the private sector is characterized by a profit-motive. However, when it comes to education, the **private sector is required to operate on a not-for-profit basis.**

- Government may allow private sector in education in the two ways
 - **Private Finance Initiative (PFI):** A long-term contract that normally refers to cases where there is significant asset ownership by the private sector.
 - **Contracting out or franchising:** A few specific asset investments by the private sector.



Need for the participation of private Sector in Indian education system

- **Retreat of Public Spending:** India spends close to 3% of its GDP on the education sector. This is less than the proposed 6% mandated in a number of policy documents.
- **Improving quality of education:** By instilling fresh thinking into higher education, private participation can positively shape up the future of higher education.
- **Growing Importance of industry academia linkage:** Collaboration between industry and academia is key to catalyse innovation and growth in technology.
- **Channelizing Private Philanthropy:** Private philanthropy brings not only financial resources but also broader vision and mission to the education system.

- Steps taken to promote private sector participation**
- **The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009,** lays down norms and standards for private schools.
 - **Institutes of eminence (IoE) scheme:** It has been launched in the year 2017 under which UGC has declared 10 Public and 10 Private institutions as IoEs.
 - **New Education Policy (NEP):** Private HEIs having a philanthropic and public-spirited intent will be encouraged through a progressive regime of fees determination. The policy, among other things, also provides for:
 - **Regulation:** An effective quality self-regulation or accreditation system will be instituted for all stages of education including pre-school education - private, public, and philanthropic - to ensure compliance with essential quality standards.
 - **Curbing Commercialization of Education.** All education institutions will be held to similar standards of audit and disclosure as a 'not for profit' entity. Surpluses, if any, will be reinvested in the educational sector.
 - **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** 100% FDI through automatic route is allowed in education sector.

Issues faced by Indian education sector due to participation of private sector in education system

- **Exclusionary education:** Privatization of education has made the education system exclusionary by providing wider choices to relatively affluent and rich students, but it has excluded very poor, girls and marginalized groups.
- **Commercialization of education:** The current regulatory regime also has not been able to curb the commercialization and economic exploitation of parents by many for-profit private schools, yet at the same time it has all too often inadvertently discouraged public-spirited private/philanthropic schools.
- **Inefficient regulation:** Regulation and accreditation in India are centralized with poor outreach in the federal states. Also, corrupt practices within regulatory agencies like UGC and AICTE have often been reported in the various federal states. Such things have stymied the quality of higher educational institutions.
- **Black money:** Most private education institutions operating as a trust or society that is not for profit, enters into transactions with entities that supply services or products needed by the school and generate a significant amount of black money.

Way ahead

- **Comprehensive policy:** A clear and decisive policy on investment will demonstrate the state's commitment to the whole initiative, boosting private investment in state higher education institutions.
- **Regulatory environment:** An appropriate regulatory environment for the provision of education in private and public schools be established.
- **Establishment of a CSR Cell in schools and universities** to attract private investment for their development. Schools and universities should be encouraged to form partnerships with companies, trust funds, societies and NGOs.

- **Roping in the private sector for management and administration:** The private sector is often revered for its managerial efficiencies and highly skilled administrative abilities.
 - Therefore, outsourcing of managerial and administrative works like preparation of result, events organisation, and formation and working of various committees will free the existing faculty members from these activities and give them more time and opportunities to delve in their own research.
- **Monetary and non-monetary support to students:** Scholarships and financial aid programmers can be developed whereby the private sector can provide financial assistance to selected students from underprivileged backgrounds. CSR funding and private philanthropy can be a useful source of funding in these areas.
- **Conclaves and Investor Summits** are very effective ways to attract investors and introduce them to the government's vision for private initiative in the education sector of the Country.

ENGLISH MEDIUM
12 Nov | 1 PM

हिन्दी माध्यम
16 Nov | 1 PM

- Specific content targeted towards Mains exam
- Complete coverage of The Hindu, Indian Express, PIB, Economic Times, Yojana, Economic Survey, Budget, India Year Book, RSTV, etc
- Doubt clearing sessions with regular assignments on Current Affairs
- Support sessions by faculty on topics like test taking strategy and stress management.
- **LIVE** and **ONLINE** recorded classes for anytime any where access by students.

ONE YEAR
CURRENT AFFAIRS
FOR GS MAINS 2021
IN 60 HOURS

5. POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

5.1. MIGRATION



5.1.1. INTERNAL MIGRANTS

Why in news?

The Supreme Court of India has delivered its judgment in the ‘migrant labourer’ case.

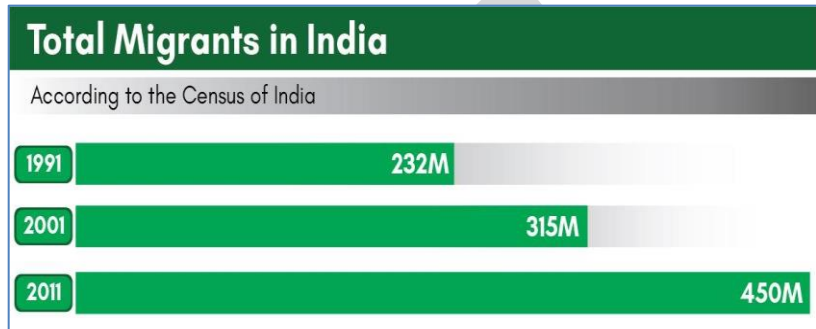
More on news

The apex court took **suo motu cognisance of the plight of the migrant workers** at the height of the exodus last year and **continued hearing the case through the second wave and gave following directions-**

- All states and Union territories (UT) to implement the ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ scheme.
- Provide **food to non-ration cardholders, increase allocation** of subsidised food and allow a migrant to **access dry ration from anywhere** under the National Food Security Act.
- The work on the portal for the **National Database for Unorganised Workers (NDUW Project)** has to be completed by July 31, 2021.

Internal Migration in India

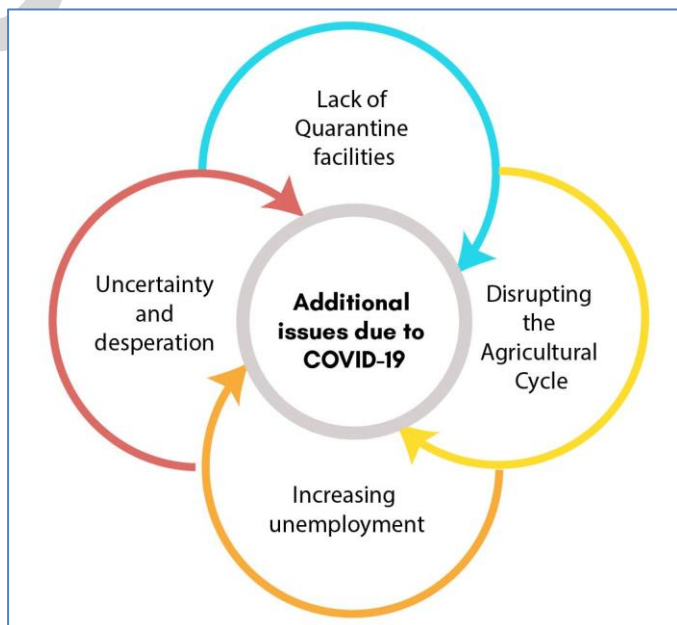
- **Definition:** It refers to the **changes of usual residence within countries**. Migration in India is primarily of two types (Refer infographic). Long term migration is relocation of an individual or household whereas short term (seasonal/circulation) migration is the back-and-forth movement of people between the source and destination.
- **Reasons:** Work, employment, business, education, marriage, etc.
- **Current status:** On an **average of 5–6 million Indians migrated annually** between 2001 and 2011, leading to an **inter-state migrant** population of “about 60 million” and an **inter-district migrant** population “as high as 80 million” (The Economic Survey, 2017).



Places of Origin of majority of migrants (densely populated and less urbanized states) Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh	Places of destination (more industrialized and urbanized states) Maharashtra, Delhi, Punjab, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala.
--	---

Issues affecting internal migrants

- **Labour Market:** Migrant workers comprise **nearly 60% of occupationally vulnerable workers** (outside agriculture) who face problems of **low wages, high risk jobs and the fear of being fired**.
- **Lack of Social Security:** Almost all states are **apathetic to the needs of migrants**, which stops the latter from accessing **welfare entitlements**.
- **Education and Skilling:** 57.8% of female and 25.8% of male migrants are illiterate (Census, 2011). About 80% of seasonal migrant children in major **destinations lack access to education** near work sites.
- **Health:** Most low-income internal migrants live in **slum accommodations**, often facing difficulties in accessing basic amenities like sanitation which has adverse impact on their health and well-being.
- **Political Participation:** Interstate migrants **cannot exercise voting right** since voting is determined by one’s inclusion in the local constituency’s electoral roll. The process of enrolling is time consuming and has **no relevance for seasonal migrants** i.e. who are not permanent settlers at destination.



Interventions undertaken for migrants

Policy Sub Area	Description
Portability of welfare schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'One Nation One Ration Card' was launched for the nation-wide portability of ration cards through the operationalisation of biometrically authenticated ePoS transactions in the State/UTs. For LPG connection, under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana 2.0 (PMUY 2.0) migrants will not be required to submit ration cards or address proof. A self-declaration for both 'family declaration' and as a 'proof of address' will suffice. Ayushman Bharat Scheme: The benefits of the scheme are portable across the country i.e. a beneficiary can visit any empanelled public or private hospital in India to avail cashless treatment.
Other initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Changathi: This is a literacy scheme by Kerala government targeted at migrant children for them to learn Malayalam Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (PM GKRA): To boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to villages, in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak. It involved skill mapping of migrant labourers and linking women with self-help groups.

Challenges in providing services to migrants

- Inadequate data:** The official data (Census or the National Sample Survey) is **more than a decade old**. Census 2011 migration data was made publicly available only in 2019.
- Policy Gap:** For instance, inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1979) applies to **only migrants crossing state boundaries** and, therefore, a large section of migrants is excluded from its ambit. It **does not monitor unregistered contractors** and establishments and remains silent on provision for crèches, education centres etc.
- Low priority by the government:** The reasons for such neglect could be that migrants do not constitute a homogeneous category, and are **segmented along gender, class, ethnicity, language and religion**.
- Declining expenditure on Social protection:** The Central government's expenditure on all major social protection programmes declined from 1.6% in 2013-14 and **to only 1.28% in 2019-20**.

Way ahead

- Fill the research gap:** Revise design of Census to adequately capture sex disaggregated data on migration.
- Coherent legal and policy framework:** Design targeted components and special outreach strategy for migrants within public services and government policies.
- Enhance institutional preparedness:** Build capacity of Panchayats to maintain a database of migrant workers, establish '**migrant labour cell**' in each state and **create inter-district and inter-state coordination committee** to jointly plan institutional arrangements between administrative jurisdictions of source and destination areas to improve service delivery.
- National Minimum Social Security Scheme for Informal Workers:** This scheme was recommended by the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS). Many features include nationwide portability in terms of registration, payment of premium and a national minimum social security package for all the workers.
- Sensitization:** Sensitize and train policymakers, employers and financial institutions regarding obstacles in accessing public services by migrants.

Conclusion

Since migration has cross-cutting sectoral impacts, **multiple and complementary interventions** by different ministries and departments are needed, to facilitate migration and ensure **integration of migrants into the economic, social, political and cultural life** of the country.

5.2. SOCIAL SECURITY FOR INFORMAL WORKERS

Why in news?

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the gaps in India's social security policies, specifically towards informal workers.

Social Security & its significance

- **Definition:** The Code on Social Security 2020 defines social security as "the measures of **protection afforded** to employees and other workers to ensure access to **health care** and to provide **income security**."
 - According to the **ILO**, social security is based on the **recognition of human dignity and social justice** guaranteed by law to all human beings.

Challenges in access to social security for informal workers

- **Gaps in the Code on Social Security, 2020:**
 - **Lack of a minimum national benefit policy:** Social security provisions currently have varying thresholds and depend on the wage earned by the worker and the total number of workers in the enterprise, among other things.
 - **Lack of accountability:** The registration of unorganised workers is the responsibility of the district administration, but he/she is not accountable for delayed registration.
 - **Subordinate Legislation:** The vital provisions of the code can be defined and reworked through the discretion of the executive.
 - **Overlapping of definitions:** For example, a driver working for an app-based taxi aggregator is a gig worker, platform worker and unorganised worker at the same time. This might create confusion in application of schemes.

- **Other gaps across the schemes:**

- **Fragmented administration systems:** Social security schemes are run by multiple ministries and departments at Union and State level.
- **Exclusion errors:** Introduction of Aadhaar card for authentication, digitalisation of welfare system, poor internet connectivity etc. led to exclusion of many eligible beneficiaries.
 - For example, a recent survey amongst Jharkhand's particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs) showed that Aadhaar disrupted their PDS supply and pension payments.
- **Low awareness among beneficiaries:** As the majority of informal workers are illiterate
- **Lack of regular revision of entitlement amounts:** For example, the amount provided under the IGNOAP (Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension) scheme was revised for beneficiaries who are 80 years of age and above in 2011.

Constitutional Provisions

Concurrent List

Item No. 23: Social Security and insurance, employment and unemployment.

Item No. 24: Welfare of Labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employer's liability, workmen's compensation, invalidity and old age pension and maternity benefits.

Directive Principles of State Policy

Article 41 : Provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want.

Article 42 : Provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.



- **Challenges highlighted by COVID:** Like Crippled financial inclusion infrastructure, lack of portability of social security benefits etc.

Way forward

Multi-pronged interventions will be important in addressing the limited reach and scope of social protection for informal workers in India at present. These include:

- **e-Shram portal:** It is India's first national database on unorganised sector workers. All unorganised workers, including migrant workers, can now take the benefits of various social security and employment-based schemes through registration on the e-Shram portal.
- **Minimum social security net:** For all workers irrespective of wage, enterprise size, and place of origin. Even SDG target 1.3 calls for the implementation of nation-wide social protection floors.
- **Compliance to labour legislations:** By a robust monitoring and enforcement mechanism.
- **IEC:** Creating awareness about entitlements by leveraging the labour unions and other civil society organisations.

Informality in Indian labour market and access to social security benefits

- Of the total workforce in India about **90% of the total workforce is engaged in informal employment** in 2018-19.
 - Moreover, 9.5% of workers had an informal nature of jobs even though they were employed in the formal sector.
- In terms of social security provisions, **only 26% were eligible for one or a combination of social security benefits** like Provident Fund, healthcare benefits, maternity benefits etc.
- Estimates suggest that up to **80% of workers lost their jobs during the entire COVID lockdown**. Majority of these were informal and non-agricultural self-employed worker.

5.3. PREVENTION OF BEGGING

Why in news?

The Supreme Court (SC) recently refused to ban begging.

About beggary

- **Definition:** Begging is **soliciting or receiving alms in public places** by exposing wound, injury, deformity, or disease, whether of oneself or of any other person or animal.
- **Causes:** It is the **consequence of destitution**. Persons experiencing destitution live in a vicious cycle of poverty, homelessness, powerlessness, stigmatization, discrimination, exclusion, and material deprivation, all of which mutually reinforce each other.

• **Vulnerable people are the most affected section:** A substantial percentage of people who are found begging are persons with disability, trans-genders, infirm or affected by illnesses such as leprosy.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL PROVISIONS ON BEGGING

Constitutional	Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959	Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As per the 7th Schedule of the Constitution of India and under serial no. 9 of State List, the subject matter of "Relief of the disabled and unemployable" comes under the purview of State List. ● The State are responsible for taking necessary preventive and rehabilitative steps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This law carries a penalty of detention of 3 to 10 years in beggar homes. ● It has been adopted by about 20 states. ● Activists argue that its is an oppressive law, and allows the police to detain or arrest anyone who is poor. ● Note: India has no federal law on begging and destitution. 	<p>Under this Act, children found begging are treated as victims in need of care and protection to be dealt with by child welfare committees. Some of the states laws, on the other hand, treat them as criminals who can be sent to an institution.</p>

Why should begging not be criminalized?

- **Violation of Right to Life (Article 21 of the Constitution):** For many, begging is a means of survival. Criminalizing begging might force them towards starvation.
- **Does not resolve the issue of deprivation:** In **Harsh Mander & Anr. v. Union of India (2018)**, the Delhi High Court decriminalized begging and validated the idea that **poverty is a human rights issue**.

- **Beggars are victims of socioeconomic inequality:** Almost 3,00,000 children are forced to beg everyday by human trafficking cartels, most of whom are missing and are intentionally maimed so that they receive more money (out of sympathy).
- **Lack of Empathy:** Criminalization lacks empathy and absolves the welfare State of failing to provide citizens with their basic minimum requirements — food, housing, education, and health.
- **Lack of holistic policy to address the issue:** Beggary can be classified as exploitation and is also against Article 23 (right against exploitation) of the Constitution. Yet, at national level, India does not have a comprehensive policy to address the problem of poverty.

Way ahead

- **Survey for identification of beggars:** Identification of beggars and issuance of required certificates and multipurpose smart cards to them would help to know the level of problem associated with beggary.
- **Legislative measure: The Persons in Destitution (Protection, Care and Rehabilitation) Model Bill, 2016,** that strives to address the issue of chronic beggary and homelessness in India needs to be passed forthwith.
- **Dealing with associated crimes that fuel beggary:** For example, criminal response to human trafficking, mafias promoting begging among others.
- **Meeting expectations of a Welfare State:** To make alternative, well-paying and dignified employment accessible to poor people, it is important to impart requisite education and skills, and to have social security nets.
- **Emulating good practices of states:** The **Government of Odisha**, as part of an integrated initiative for beggars has launched an **umbrella scheme “SAHAYA”** for protection, care and rehabilitation of beggars.

Conclusion

It is the responsibility of the government to develop policies so that all its citizens can achieve that wholesome life. India is also part of the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** which has a provision for the right to live with dignity. Therefore, a concrete policy to deal with the issue of beggary and homelessness is the need of the hour for India.

5.4. MANUAL SCAVENGING

Why in news?

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched the **‘Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge’** in 243 cities across the country **to end manual scavenging by 2021.**

More on news

- Under the campaign, **sewers and septic tanks in 243 cities will be mechanized and a helpline created to register complaints** if manual scavenging is reported. Cities which reach the end result will receive prize money.
- Its mission is to **prevent any loss of life** due to the issue of ‘hazardous cleaning’ of sewers and septic tanks.
- The measures are part of the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan** (Clean India initiative).

Background

- **Definition:** It is the practice of manual cleaning of human excreta from **service/ dry latrines.**
- **Current status:** According to the data collected by the Safai Karmachari Andolan (SKA), there **were 1,870 sewer deaths reported in India** from 1993-2019 with maximum sewer death occurring in Tamil Nadu. **UP** is among states with the **highest number of dry and service latrines.** According to a government survey conducted in 170 districts in 18 States identified **54,130 people engaged in this job** as of July 2019.

Reasons why manual scavenging still persists in India?

- **Continued presence of insanitary latrines:** There are about 2.6 million insanitary latrines (dry toilets) that require cleaning by hand.
- **Social perception:** It is a caste based and hereditary profession and defined as a "cultural occupation" attached to lower castes. Lack of opportunity and education compels them to continue in their inherited work.
- **Loopholes in the legal protection:** 2013 Act bans ‘hazardous cleaning’ of septic tanks and sewer pits, without ‘protective gear’ and ‘other cleaning devices. But it **does not define what the ‘protective gear’**

is. Also, the Act does not provide for rehabilitation of those who were liberated from manual scavenging before passing the law in 2013.

- **Shortcomings in regulatory framework:** The numerous operational activities along the sanitation chain — emptying and conveyance of faecal sludge, sewer maintenance, etc. have often been invisible or disregarded in regulatory frameworks.
 - Due to engineering defects in septic tanks, machines cannot clean it after a point and require manual cleaning.

Way ahead

- **Adopt operational guidelines:** To assess and mitigate the occupational risks of all types of sanitation work, including national standard operating procedures, municipal-level oversight of sanitation service providers.
- **Institutional reforms:** Recognize all types of sanitation work and provide the frameworks that enable the organization and empowerment of sanitation workers. **Promote the gradual formalization and mechanization** of the work.
 - In Thiruvananthapuram, a group of engineers has designed a **spider-shaped robot called “BANDICOOT”** that cleans manholes and sewers with precision.
- **Bridge the key knowledge gaps in the sector:** Build the evidence base to address the issues of quantification of the sanitation workforce and documentation of challenges that these workers face and good practice in improving working conditions.
- **Unions and associations of sanitation workers:** For promoting their empowerment by protecting their rights and amplifying their voices.

Conclusion

Protecting the manual scavengers is not only a matter of rights, health, and dignity of the workers themselves, but it also is key to ensure a sufficiently large, formalized, and protected workforce to deliver and sustain safely managed sanitation services with dignity, as has been called for under the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

“ **The Secret To Getting Ahead Is Getting Started** ”

LIVE / ONLINE CLASSES AVAILABLE

ALTERNATIVE CLASSROOM PROGRAM *for*

GENERAL STUDIES

PRELIMS & MAINS 2024 & 2025

DELHI: 25 NOV | 10 DEC | 11 JAN

- Approach is to build fundamental concepts and analytical ability in students to enable them to answer questions of Preliminary as well as Mains examination
- Includes comprehensive coverage of all the topics for all the four papers of GS Mains , GS Prelims and Essay
- Includes All India GS Mains, Prelim, CSAT and Essay Test Series of 2023, 2024, 2025
- Our Comprehensive Current Affairs classes of PT 365 and Mains 365 of year 2023, 2024, 2025 (Online Classes only)
- Includes comprehensive, relevant and updated study material
- Access to recorded classroom videos at personal student platform

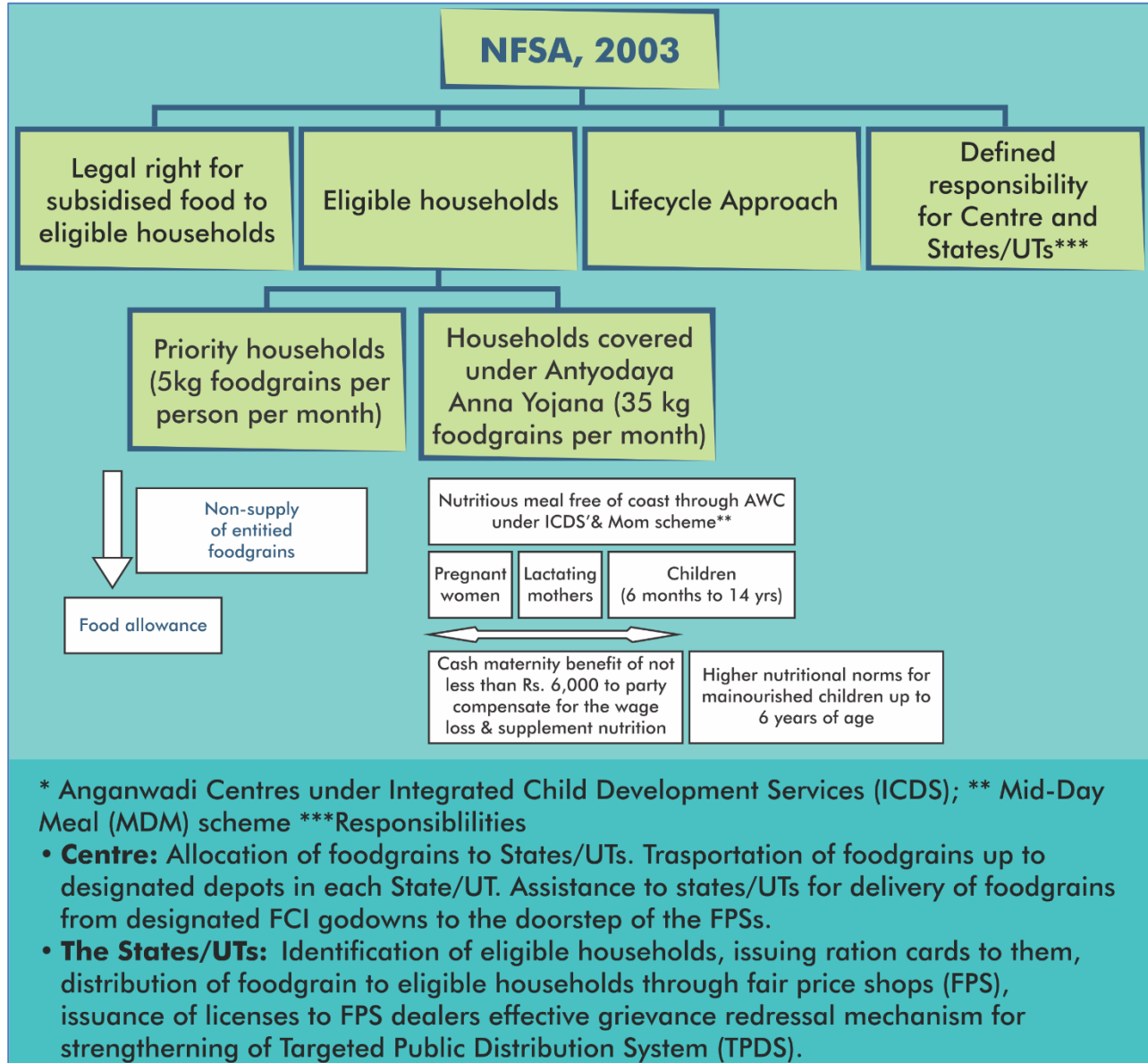
Scan the QR CODE to download **VISION IAS** app

6. NUTRITION AND SANITATION

6.1. NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT (NFSA), 2013

Why in news?

The NITI Aayog recently circulated a discussion paper on a proposed revision in the NFSA, 2013.



Need for revisiting NFSA, 2013

- **Validity of Central Issue Price (CIP):** CIP was fixed for “a period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act (i.e. till July, 2016). However, the CIP has remained unchanged since 2013.
- **Rising food subsidy bill:** Because the Minimum Support Price (MSP) is much higher than CIP resulting in a high food subsidy bill.
- **Burden of maintenance of surplus stocks:** High production and hikes in MSP with no changes in the CIP has led to accumulation of stocks with FCI. These surplus stocks beyond the operational and strategic reserve requirement have also risen.
- **Market distortion:** If CIP is not revised, the absolute number of beneficiaries (67% of the total population) would increase due to increase in population.

Criticism of proposed revision in NFSA, 2013

- **Lack of objective evaluation:** Revision is not based on the objective evaluation of its functioning and efficacy but on the necessity of reducing our food subsidy.

- **No proposal for enhancing efficiency:** The high food subsidy is actually a result of the mismanagement of food procurement and storage by the government.
- **Weakening of food and nutrition security:** The latest data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) has clearly shown **stagnation and in many cases reversal of the gains made on the nutritional front**. The situation would be further exacerbated if the number of beneficiaries are reduced.

Way ahead

- **Reforms should be based on independent evaluation of the Act:** While proposed reforms in the NFSA are welcome after six years of implementation, such a process should be based on an **independent evaluation** of its functioning in the context of the Act's stated objectives.
- **Better targeting of beneficiaries:** The coverage of NFSA needs to be restricted to the **bottom 20%** and the CIP for others could be linked to the procurement prices.
- **Priorities one nation, one ration (ONOR) card:** This initiative would be helpful in effective targeting and reducing leakages.
- **Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT):** A better alternative to subsidized food would be giving income transfers to consumers through DBT.
- **Better management of surplus stock:** Following steps would help reduce the excess surplus with the FCI without creating any market distortion.
 - **"Price deficiency" payment scheme:** Farmers could be compensated for the difference between the government announced MSPs for select crops and their actual market prices.
 - **FCI should actively participate in the commodity exchange** as a seller for wheat and rice. This will increase the liquidity in the market and reduce market distortions.

Conclusion

The NFSA is a law passed by Parliament. Therefore, the government and Parliament both should take a call for any revision in its provisions. Moreover, the number of beneficiaries, which was fixed in 2011, was based on some criteria. Hence, any revision in coverage of people should succeed the exercise of data analysis.

6.2. NATIONAL SCHEME FOR PM POSHAN SHAKTI NIRMAN

Why in news?

The existing Mid-Day Meal scheme, which provides hot meals to students, will be renamed as the **National Scheme for PM Poshan Shakti Nirman or PM POSHAN scheme**

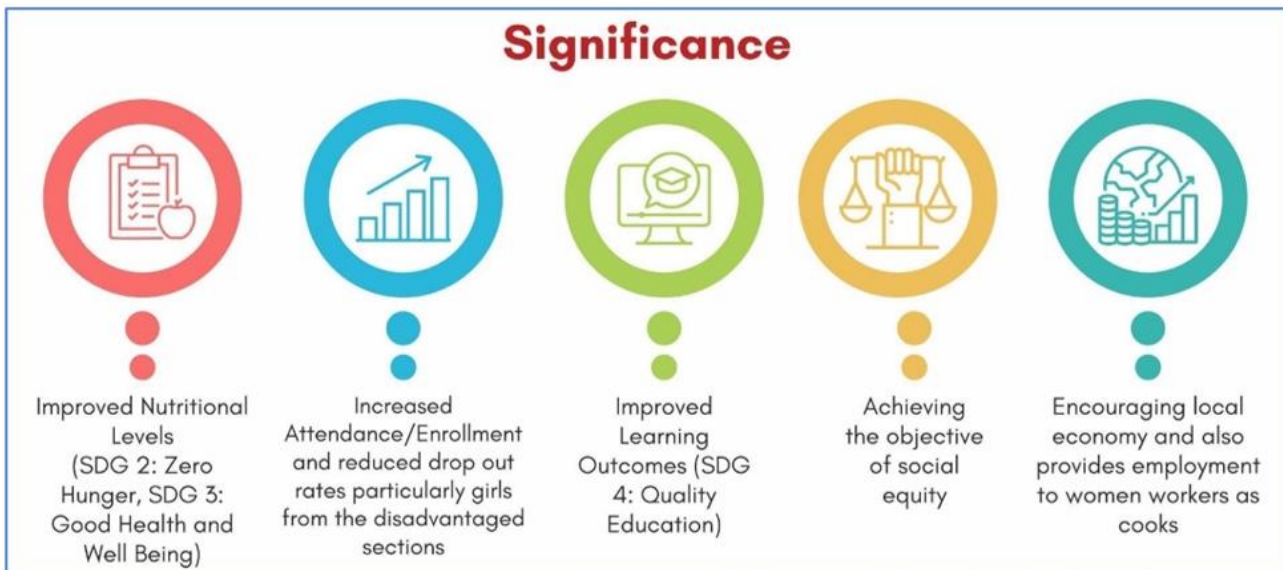
About Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS)

- The National Programme of Mid-Day Meals in School (MDM) is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)** of the **Ministry of Education**.
- It is the **world's largest school feeding programme** and aims at providing school meals to students with a view to enhance enrolment, retention, and attendance of children while simultaneously improving nutrition at all levels.
 - The Centre and State government share the cooking cost for daily meals in the **ratio of 60:40** for non-North eastern states (NER) and UTs with legislatures except Jammu and Kashmir and in the **ratio of 90:10** for all others.
- The children covered under the MDM Scheme are entitled to meals under the **National Food Security Act, 2013**.

Challenges in MDMS

- **Poor quality of food:** There have been reports that children were fed substandard or adulterated food due to the poor infrastructure, and lack of community ownership in the community.
- **Social Discrimination:** Study by the Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS) in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, etc. found that Dalit children were being given less amount of food compared to upper caste children.
- **Improper Monetary Mechanism:** There are provisions for regular social audit, field visits and inspections but these are seldom carried out.
- **Corruption and leakages:** Corruption is involved in the delivery system. Fake enrolments are being done to embezzle money. Also, the sanctioned amount for meals has not been completely utilized.

- **Meager allocation of Resources:** Experts believe that direct cash transfer amount is too meager and at current rate it translates into a **one-time direct transfer of just Rs 100 per child.**



About National Scheme for PM Poshan Shakti Nirman

Objective	Salient Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure holistic nutrition for students of government and government-aided schools across India. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Under the previous scheme, the focus was on providing a meal to students but now, under PM POSHAN, the focus is to ensure the nutritional aspects as well. • To tackle malnutrition and provide cooked meal to children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PM POSHAN, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, has been launched for a period of five years, from 2021-22 to 2025-26, with a budget of Rs 1,30,794.90 crore. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Centre bears the entire cost of food grains and their transportation, management, monitoring and evaluation under the scheme, components such as cooking costs, payments to cooks and workers are split in a 60:40 ratio with states. • Coverage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It will benefit 11.80 crore children studying in 11.20 lakh schools across the country. ○ Under the scheme, midday meals have been extended to children of Balvatika in addition to children studying in classes 1 to 8 in government and government-aided schools in the country. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Around 24 lakh more children in pre-primary classes, currently covered under the ICDS, will also be brought in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Last year, the government had opened pre-schools called Balvatikas attached to Angandwadis. ✓ The extension of mid-day meals to pre-primary students, who are to be incorporated into the formal education system, was a key recommendation of the National Education Policy 2020 • Vocal for Local for Atmanirbhar Bharat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To support Vocal4Local and fulfill the objectives of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, PM POSHAN will involve Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO) and Women Self Help Groups in the implementation of the scheme. • Social Audit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social audits will be made mandatory for each school in every district to oversee and check implementation of the scheme. ○ It would engage university and college students to monitor implementation of the scheme through field visits. • Supplementary Nutrition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The focus is to ensure the nutritional aspects as well. States or districts having high prevalence of anemia can include any supplementary item. ○ Similarly, if states want to include their local vegetable or any other nutritional food or anything else such as milk or fruit, they can do so with the Centre's approval. However, it should fall within the allocated budget. • Nutritional Garden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It will promote the development of nutrition gardens in schools. ○ The harvest of these gardens will be used to provide additional micro-nutrients to students.

- Schools will also be encouraged to organize cooking competitions to promote ethnic cuisine and innovative menus based on locally available ingredients and vegetables.
- **Tithi Bhojan**
 - It has also included the concept of 'Tithi Bhojan' wherein students from private schools will be encouraged to share their meals with children from marginalized sections at least once in a month on a voluntary basis.
 - States will also be asked to organize community programmes in which people provide special food to children.

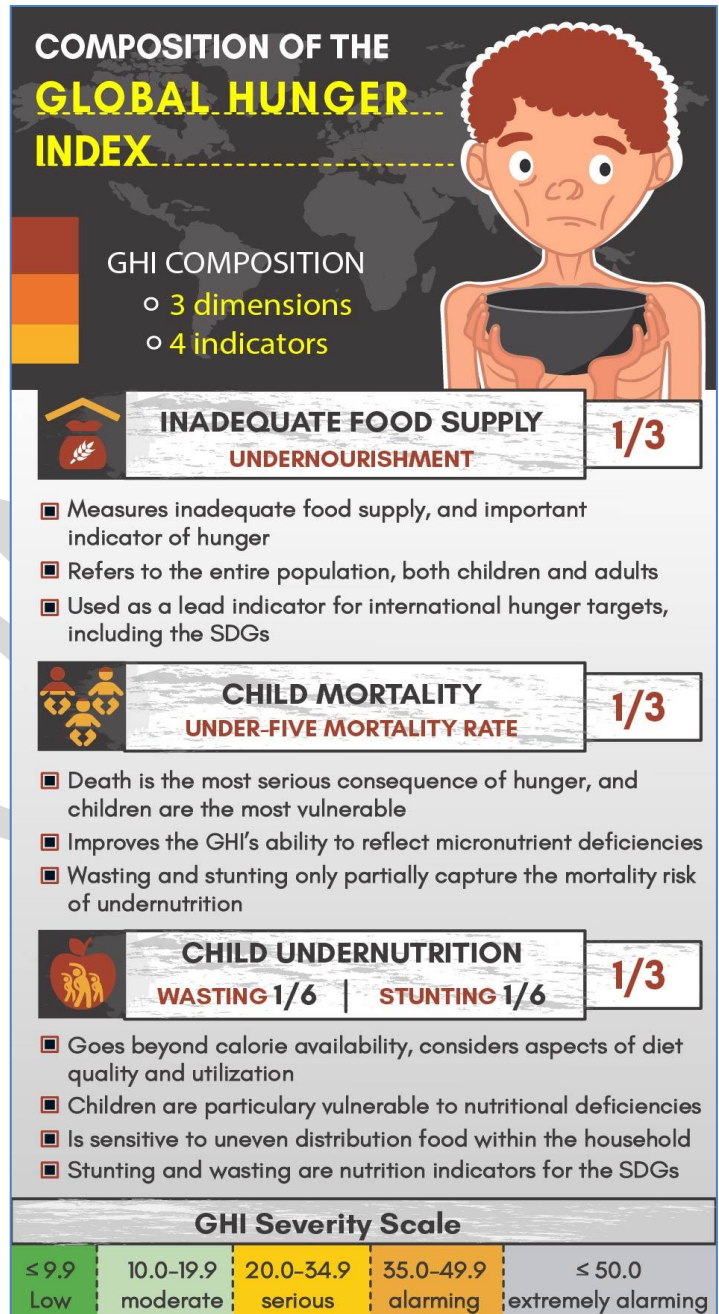
6.3. GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX 2021

Why in news?

India slips to 101st rank in Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2021 India of 116 countries, from its 2020 position of 94 out of 107 countries.

More on news

- GHI is used to measure and track hunger at global, regional, and national levels. It uses four parameters to determine its score (see infographic).
 - GHI is published by Concern Worldwide (international humanitarian organization) and Welthungerhilfe (private aid organisation in Germany).
- **Key global findings**
 - **Conflict, climate change, and COVID-19 (3C's)** threaten to wipe out any progress that has been made against hunger in recent years.
 - **Somalia has the highest level of hunger.** 18 countries, including China, Brazil and Kuwait, shared the top rank.
- **Findings related to India**
 - **India, with 101 rank** (94 in 2020), is trailing behind Pakistan (92), Bangladesh (76) and Nepal (76).
 - **Wasting (low weight for height) among children increased** from 17.1% between 1998 and 2002 to 17.3% between 2016 and 2020.
 - **Shown improvement in indicators such as under-5 mortality rate, prevalence of stunting among children and prevalence of undernourishment** owing to inadequate food.
- In reaction to GHI, the **Ministry of women and child development** stated that **India's rank was lowered on the basis of the FAO report** (used for assessing undernourishment in GHI), which suffers from serious methodological issues.
 - The **GHI assigns 70.5% weightage to children below five** who constitute only a minor population share and **29.5% weightage to the population above five**, which constitutes **81.5% of the total population**.
 - Evidence shows that **weight and height of children are not solely determined by food intake** but are an outcome of a complex interaction of factors related to genetics, the environment, sanitation and utilisation of food intake. The IFPRI acknowledges that **only 45% of child mortality is due to hunger or undernutrition**.

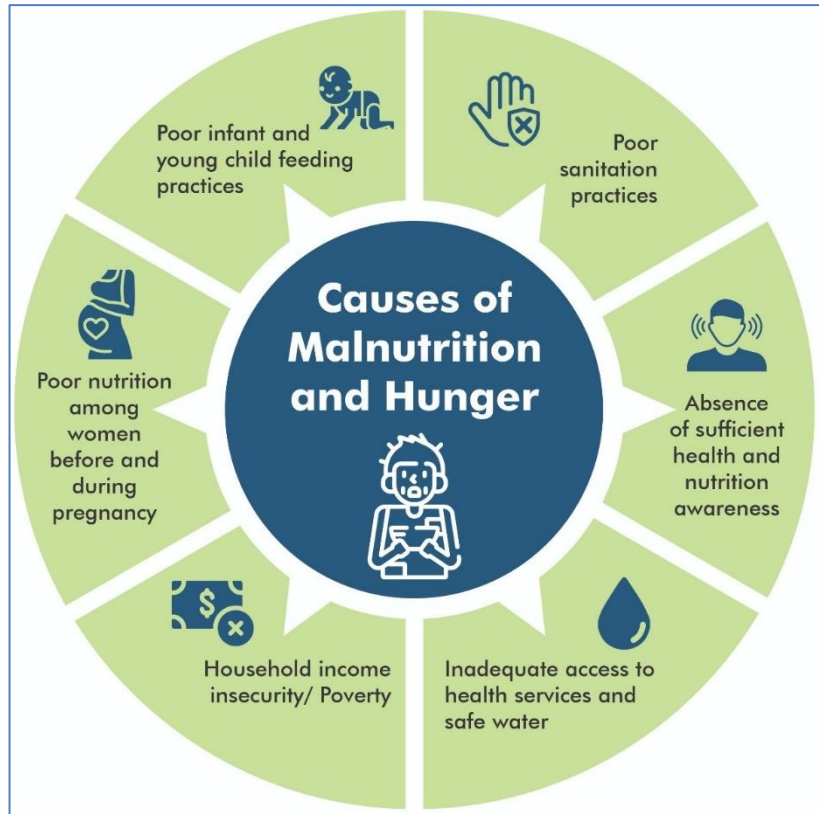


About Food Security

- **Definition:** Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences to ensure an active and healthy life.

Current status: However, as per UN- Food and Agriculture Organization report, **194 million** people go hungry every day in India, comprising about 23% of the world's undernourished population.

- **Consequences of food insecurity:** Lower cognitive ability, diminished work performance and substantial productivity losses.
- **Food production in India:** India has become a **net food exporter** country. It produces **more than** the estimated amount **required to feed the entire population** (in 2018-19, India produced 283.37 million tons of food grains). The country ranks **first in millets and second in rice and wheat production** in the world.



Challenges in tackling Hunger & Malnourishment in India

- **Weak Implementation of schemes:** Due to the top-down approach, and poor implementation processes, lack of effective monitoring, and siloed approaches, shortage of qualified human resources, etc.
- **Food wastage:** India wastes about 7% of its total annual food production and almost 30% of the fruits and vegetables because of inadequate warehousing facilities and cold storages.
- **Low status of women:** Indian women's nutrition, feeding and caring practices for young children are inadequate. This is related to their status in society, to early marriage, low weight at pregnancy and their lower level of education.
- **Shifts in diet and lifestyle patterns:** More consumption of foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt as nowadays they are cheaper and more readily available.
- **Social structure:** Several schemes do not reach large sections of the people especially marginalized tribes and Dalits, who find themselves ostracized by the distribution system.
- **COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fragility of globalized food systems:** It is characterized by increasing dependence on food imports by low- and middle-income countries; underinvestment in local farmers, farmer associations, and smallholder-oriented value chains; and increasing rates of diet-related non-communicable disease.

Way forward

- **Identification of early signs of malnourishment:** Government should re-activate and scale-up services for the early detection and treatment of child wasting. Also, governments must produce data that are timely available, comprehensive, and disaggregated by income, subnational location, and gender.
- **Implement POSHAN-plus strategy** which apart from continued strengthening the four pillars (technology, convergence, behavioural change and capacity building) of the Abhiyaan also requires addressing the governance challenges of National Health Mission (NHM)/ ICDS delivery mechanism and renewed focus on:
 - **Complementary feeding** (usually targeted at the age range of 6-24 months)
 - **Investments in education of girls and women**, reduce early marriage and early pregnancy, improving care during and after pregnancy etc.

- **Capacity building:** Organisation of regular orientation programmes, exposing workers to new techniques available, use of information technology to improve program monitoring, etc.
- **Behavioural changes:** All adolescent girls and women need to be educated on nutritional behavior and should be provided educational and skilling opportunities to delay marriage.
- **Design and development of more efficient integrated systems** of food production, processing, preservation and distribution to suit the changing lifestyle of the country's population.
- **Residential care for food security of the most vulnerable children:** For children of rural seasonal migrants, the village school should be converted into a community-based temporary residential school, to enable the child to access food and education, without having to migrate every year with their guardians.
- **Formal and informal education on agriculture and nutrition** should be tailored to local conditions.

Steps taken by the Government to ensure nutritional security

- **POSHAN Abhiyaan:** Launched in 2018, it is a multi-ministerial convergence mission with the vision to ensure attainment of malnutrition free India by 2022 in a phased manner, through a life cycle approach, by adopting a synergised and result oriented approach.
- **Mid-day meals** in primary and upper primary schools, along with anganwadis, have played an important role in monitoring and supplementing efforts to reduce malnutrition through free food for children (and pregnant as well as lactating women).
- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has notified norms for permissible levels of micronutrients for fortifying processed food products** such as breakfast cereals, biscuits, breads, etc. to ensure balanced consumption of micronutrients fortified products.
- **Anemia Mukht Bharat strategy** has been designed to reduce prevalence of anemia by 3 percentage points per year among children, adolescents and women in the reproductive age group (15-49 years), between the year 2018 and 2022
- **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme** is one of the flagship programmes of the Government of India. It aims to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years.
- **Jharkhand government's SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction) campaign:** It aims to identify anemic women and malnourished children and converge various departments to effectively deal with the problem in a state where malnutrition has been a major problem. The campaign also tries to target Primarily Vulnerable Tribal Groups.

ALL INDIA TEST SERIES

Get the Benefit of Innovative Assessment System from the leader in the Test Series Program

PRELIMS

- **General Studies** (हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध)
 - **CSAT** (हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध)
- VISION IAS Post Test Analysis™ ➤ All India Ranking
➤ Flexible Timings ➤ Expert support - Email/
➤ ONLINE Student Account to Telephonic Interaction
write tests and Performance ➤ Monthly Current Affairs
Analysis

for **PRELIMS 2022** starting from **14 Nov**

for **PRELIMS 2021: 14 Nov**

प्रारंभिक 2022 के लिए 14 नवंबर

MAINS

- **General Studies** (हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध)
- **Essay** (हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध)
- **Philosophy • Sociology • Political Science & IR**

for **MAINS 2022** starting from **14 Nov**

for **MAINS 2021: 14 Nov**

मुख्य 2022 के लिए 14 नवंबर

Scan the QR CODE to
download **VISION IAS** app



6.4. SANITATION

SANITATION AT- A GLANCE

Current status

- » In 2010, the UNGA recognized access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a **human right**.
- » **According to the WHO:**
 - In 2017, 45% of the global population (3.4 billion people) used a safely managed sanitation service.
 - At least 10% of the world's population is thought to consume food irrigated by wastewater.

Benefits of improved sanitation

- » **Tackling Water borne disease** like Diarrhoea as well as the spread of **Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)** like intestinal worms, schistosomiasis, trachoma, etc.; Reducing the severity and impact of **malnutrition**;
- » Reducing **infant mortality rate (IMR)**;
- » **Promoting dignity** and boosting safety, particularly among women and girls;
- » **Promoting school attendance:** girls' school attendance is particularly boosted by the provision of separate sanitary facilities; and
- » **Potential recovery of water,** renewable energy and nutrients from faecal waste.



Challenges

- » **Finance:** India would have to spend 3.2% of the GDP to deliver sustainable water management by 2030
- » **Urbanisation:** Urban poor live increasingly in slums where sewerage, mega cities is precarious or non-existent.
- » **Polluted water:** Discharge of partially treated or untreated wastewater directly into rivers, lakes or the ocean.
- » **Lack of accessibility:** About 28.7% of rural households across India still lacked access to any form of latrines.



Steps Taken

- » **Sustainable Development Goal target 6.2** calls for adequate and equitable sanitation for all.
- » The **WHO** monitors **global burden of disease** and the level of sanitation access.
- » **Initiatives by India:** Jal Jeevan Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission, Namami Gange program, Awareness campaign on benefits of hand washing, Swachh Survekshan survey, etc.

Way ahead

- » Promoting **effective risk assessment** and management practices for sanitation in communities.
- » Effective regulatory and monitoring mechanism.
- » **Sensitisation for judicious use of water** and prevention of water bodies from pollution.
- » Holistic approach for **conversion of hygiene-related knowledge into practice.**
- » **Door-to-door campaigns,** community meetings, emotional messaging, pledge, for handwashing.

6.4.1. WATER SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Why in news?

Recently, researchers from the Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics and Policy (CDDEP) US, have estimated the **cost of ensuring Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and taking related steps for infection prevention and control in India.**

More about news

- **According to study**
 - Improving WASH across the public healthcare facilities in India and maintaining this for a year would cost \$354 million in capital costs and \$289 million in recurrent expenses.
 - Inadequacies in proving WASH and lack of infection prevention and control can lead to healthcare associated infections.

About Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- **Definition:** WASH is a collective term for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene relating to:
 - Access to safe drinking water
 - Improved sanitation facilities
 - Maintaining basic level of hygiene.
- **Importance of WASH**
 - **WASH & Health:** WASH is a prerequisite to prevent infections like cholera, diarrhea (the third leading cause of childhood mortality in India), and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). Prevention of infection helps in
 - **WASH & SDG:** WASH is an important component of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2030
 - ✓ SDG3: Good health and well-being
 - ✓ SDG 6: Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water sanitation for all.
- **India & WASH:** According to the 2020 analysis by the World Resources Institute:
 - Securing water for communities across the world by 2030 could cost just over 1% of global GDP.
 - It would take India 3.2% of the GDP to deliver sustainable water management by 2030 to deliver sustainable water management.

WASH and INDIA	
Steps taken by India	Description
1. Jal Jeevan Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched in 2019 to provide every rural household with water supply by 2024.
2. Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On October 2, 2019, all the villages in the 36 States and Union Territories of India were declared open defecation-free (ODF). • In 2020, the centre launched SBM 2.0 which aims at ODF plus by focusing on sustainability of the ODF.
3. 100-day campaign for 100% coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched by the Ministry of Jal Shakti on Gandhi Jayanti in 2020. • Aimed at providing potable piped water supply for drinking and cooking purposes and tap water for hand washing and in toilets in every school, anganwadi and ashramshala or residential tribal school in 100 days.
4. Namami Gange program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic program on cleaning the Ganga. • It entails setting up biodiversity centers, crematoriums and toilets along the river banks to reduce pollution in the river.
5. Awareness campaign on benefits of hand washing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon the onset of COVID-19 pandemic government through various measures like call tunes, is promoting awareness about benefits of frequent hand washing.

Challenges in ensuring WASH

- **Access to clean water:** In India over 120 million households lack access to clean water near their homes, the highest in the world (the UN-Water). Also, in rural India, close to 90% households do not have piped connections
 - Most of the Indian rivers are contaminated, and in most of the cities water supplied through tap water is not safe.
 - Even ground water is also contaminated in many parts of the country. For example the presence of arsenic in the eastern belt in the Ganga-Brahmaputra region.
- **Gap in Sanitation and Hygiene:** According to the National Statistical Office (NSO), 2019, data about 28.7% of rural households across India still lacked access to any form of latrines and 3.5% of those who have access to latrines, don't use it (it reflects the behavioural issue).

Way ahead

- **Water:** Following steps would help enhancing the access to safe drinking water
 - **Regulatory measure:** It is mandatory for bottled water manufacturers to meet quality standards by the BIS standard. However, compliance with quality standards is voluntary for the public agencies which supply and distribute piped water. This shortcoming needs to be rectified.

- Sensitisation, for judicious use of water and prevention of water bodies from pollution is the need of the hour.
- Infrastructure for storage of water must be developed adequately.
- **Sanitation and hygiene:** Traditional approaches to behavioural change on hygiene have been limited to educational messages via awareness campaigns. Such an approach does not necessarily lead to sustained behaviour change.
 - **Multiple factors-** emotions, habits, settings, infrastructure, poverty, attitude, and lack of will-**prevent the conversion of hygiene-related knowledge into practice** and practice into a habit.
 - Programmes on hygiene need to **appreciate the interplay between these factors and design an integrated approach** rather than addressing it in isolation. Door-to-door campaigns, community meetings, emotional messaging, pledge, prayers, could be great platforms to promote the benefits of handwashing.

WASH and global efforts

- WHO has adopted WASH Strategy, 2018-25
 - **Vision:** To substantially improve health through the safe management of water, sanitation and hygiene services in all settings.
 - **The WHO focuses on**
 - ✓ Generating and disseminating **standards and guidelines**
 - ✓ **Strengthening health sector capacities** in providing WASH support
 - ✓ **Public health oversight** through surveillance and regulation,
 - ✓ Promoting the **generation of evidence**
 - ✓ **Empowering countries** through technical cooperation to strengthen national systems and institutions etc.
- The UN General Assembly in 2010 had adopted a resolution for **progressive realization of the human rights to safe drinking-water and sanitation.**

Conclusion

Lack of WASH in health centres undermines any efforts to improve quality of care. The intersection between WASH, infection prevention and control and antimicrobial resistance is unique. **It offers policy makers an opportunity to address multiple overlapping problems** through interventions on WASH in healthcare facilities.

ESSAY

ENRICHMENT PROGRAM 2021

Starts: 31 OCT | 5 PM

- ▶ Introducing different stages from developing an idea into completing an essay
- ▶ Practical and efficient approach to learn different parts of essay
- ▶ Regular practice and brainstorming sessions
- ▶ Inter disciplinary approaches
- ▶ **LIVE / ONLINE** Classes Available

7. MISCELLANEOUS

7.1. URBANISATION OF PANDEMICS

Why in news?

COVID-19 almost over the entire world is very urban-centric.

Introduction

- The WHO has identified **urbanisation as one of the key challenges for public health in the 21st century**. In recent decades, many emerging infectious diseases have been occurring at an increasing scale and frequency.
 - For example, Ebola virus disease, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), avian and pandemic influenza, Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), and the recently emerged COVID-19.
- With an **ever-larger shift of populations to urban areas**, the concentration of a succession of epidemics and pandemics in cities has become stronger.
- The countries such as Spain, Italy, France, UK, Germany, Iran, and the US that have suffered the highest number of COVID-19 cases are among the **very highly urbanised countries**.
- The urban nature of the pandemic becomes clearer when we consider the megacities and the large Indian cities. As on 20 April, **ten cities of India had over half the coronavirus cases**. These cities comprised Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Indore, Pune, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Chennai, Surat and Agra.

Post pandemic City Planning

With social distancing likely to be the norm over the near future, we need to analyse how a city's design impacts health, social mobility and disease control, among other things. Basic aspects of City Planning as needed to combat future pandemics is discussed below.

- **Urban Design**
 - **City data:** Good urban design has always been a necessity, but it **needs data and feedback loops**. For most Indian cities, the data is not really structured for planning and research.
 - **Wider footpaths and walkable streets** needed so that people don't crowd together on narrow footpaths.
 - An **upgrade to health facilities, Sanitation facilities and safety information** at bus and metro stops, rail stations, inside buses and trains, in public toilets, and other public spaces.
- **Housing**
 - To ensure **livability and comfort** in homes across income classes, projects will have to consider several factors: building typology, resource efficiency, common services related to water, energy, and waste, locational aspects, connectivity, urban greenery, etc.



- Professional architects and planners have come together to provide design support and training to the self-constructed settlements of **Dharavi and Shivaji Nagar in Mumbai, and Mangolpuri in New Delhi**. This initiative must be taken forward in other cities.
- **Mobility:** Cities across the world are radically re-imagining the allocation of street space to promote sustainable mobility that is resilient to future shocks and equitable.
- **Spatial Planning:** The pandemic has highlighted again the need for building spaces that are **non-segregated mixed-class, mixed-use neighbourhoods** that allow people to support each other. Such mixing would ensure that **neglect and poverty is not locked into pockets**, that vulnerable populations have access to the city centre and its resources, and they're not neglected during a crisis.

Conclusion

The ongoing pandemic of COVID-19 is a strong reminder that urbanisation has changed the way that people and communities live, work, and interact, and the need to strengthen systems and local capacities to prevent the spread of infectious diseases is urgent. As a global community, we must collectively invest in and build strong preparedness systems that are better adapted to increasingly urbanised settings.

7.2. THE HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX 2020

Why in news?

The World Bank has recently released the report titled '**The Human Capital Index 2020 Update: Human Capital in the Time of COVID-19**'.

About the report

- The 2020 Human Capital Index update includes **health and education data for 174 countries** (additional 17 countries relative to the 2018 edition) — **covering 98% of the world's population** — up to March 2020.

What is Human Capital?


- **Definition:** Human capital consists of the **knowledge, skills, and health** that people accumulate over their lives, enabling them to realize their potential as productive members of society.
 - Human capital is **intangible** and is endogenously built in the body and mind of its owner. Only the services of the human capital are sold.
- **Sources of human capital formation include-** Expenditure on education Health, on the job training, study programmes for adults, Migration in search of jobs with better salaries, expenditure on information relating to the labour market and other markets etc.
- **Significance of Human Capital**
 - **For individuals and families**
 - ✓ **Higher earnings and improved standard of living**
 - ✓ **Generational returns:** Benefits of human capital transcend private returns, extending to others and across generations.
 - **For societies**
 - ✓ **Building social capital:** Investing in human capital enhances social cohesion and equity while strengthening people's trust in institutions. It yields productive outcomes in all aspects of society.
 - ✓ **Incremental results on Human Capital:** Societies need sufficient human capital in the form of competent people who have themselves been educated and trained as **professors and other professionals to produce other human capital**.
 - **For countries**
 - ✓ **Human capital complements physical capital** in the production process as people with higher human capital can use the physical capital more effectively and adapt faster to technological change.
 - ✓ Education provides knowledge to understand changes in society and scientific advancements, thus, **facilitate inventions and innovations**.
 - ✓ People are more productive when they are healthier and appropriately trained. This **enhanced productivity** of human beings contributes substantially towards increasing labour productivity and economic growth of a nation.
 - ✓ It is a central driver of **sustainable growth and poverty reduction**.


Key findings


- **Global HCI:** Globally, a child could expect to attain an average of **56%** of her potential productivity as a future worker.
- **Considerable variation across regions and economies:** For instance, a child born in a low-income country has an HCI of 0.37 as compared to 0.7 in a high-income country.
- **Measuring Learning Poverty:** It is the share of 10-year-olds who cannot read and understand a simple story. Around 53% of children in low- and middle-income countries suffer from learning poverty.
- **Disaggregation of the HCI by gender:** Human capital is slightly **higher among girls** than boys in most countries.
- **Underutilization of Human capital among women:** The **gender gap in employment rates** (a basic measure of utilization) is **20% points** on average worldwide, but exceeds 40% points in South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa.
 - This suggests that, while **gender gaps in human capital in childhood and adolescence have closed** (especially for education), major **challenges remain to translate these gains into opportunities for women.**
- **Human capital gains in the previous decade:** On average, the HCI increased by 2.6 points between 2010 and 2020.
- **India Specific findings**
 - India ranked at **116th from among 174** countries as compared to 115 out of 157 countries in 2018.
 - India's **HCI score increased to 0.49 from 0.44 in 2018.**
 - India is among the only two countries (other being Tonga), where **child survival rates are higher for girls than for boys.**
 - India experienced a **13-percentage-point decline in stunting rates for children under 5** from 48 percent in 2010 to 35 percent in 2020.


ADVANCED COURSE


GS MAINS





 Targeted towards those students who are aware of the basics but want to improve their understanding of complex topics, inter-linkages among them, and analytical ability to tackle the problems posed by the Mains examination.


 Covers topics which are conceptually challenging.

 Approach is completely analytical, focusing on the demands of the Mains examination.


 Comprehensive current affairs notes

 Mains 365 Current Affairs Classes (Offline)


 Sectional Mini Tests

 Duration: 12 weeks, 5-6 classes a week (If need arises, class can be held on Sundays also)

Scan the QR CODE to download VISION IAS app



STARTING
19 October
1 PM

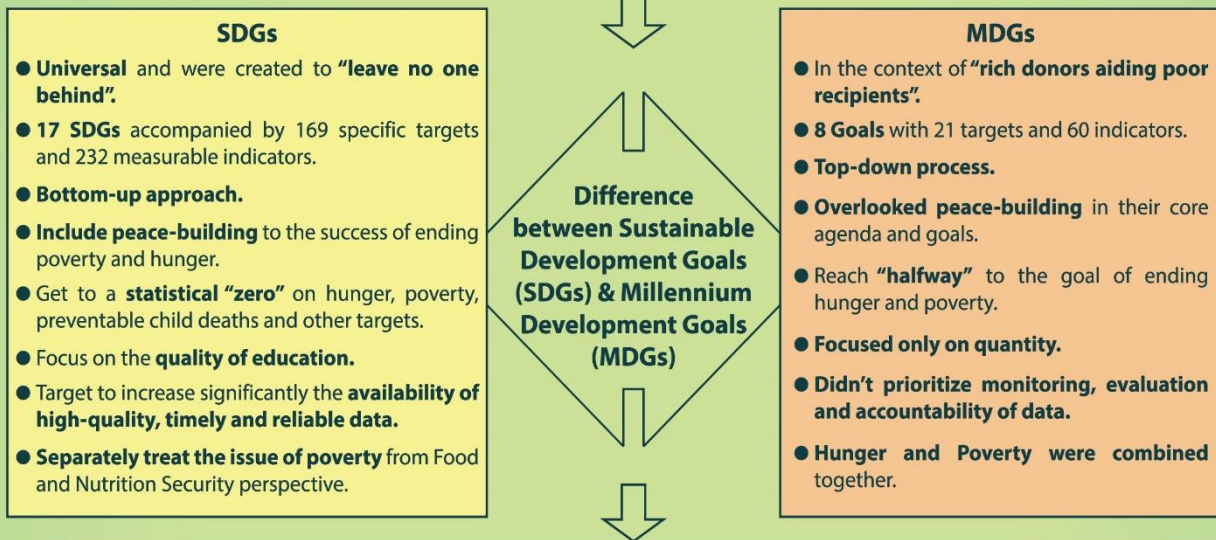
 **LIVE/ONLINE CLASSES AVAILABLE**

7.3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & ITS NEED

Concept was described by the 1987 Bruntland Commission Report as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

- 3 Objectives- Economic growth, Environmental protection, and Social inclusion.
- Ensures good governance & transparency, fight against climate change & protect biodiversity, contributes to the well-being of communities etc.



India’s SDGs progress

- **Good** → SDGs 3 (Health), 6 (Water), 7 (Sustainable Energy), 10 (Reduce Inequality), 11 (Inclusive cities), 12 (Sustainable consumptions), 16 (Inclusive societies)
- **Moderate** → SDGs 1 (Poverty), 4 (Education), 8 (Sustainable economy), 9 (Sustainable industrialization), 13 (Climate Change), 17 (Strengthen global partnerships)
- **Poor** → SDGs 2 (Hunger), 5 (Gender equality)
- **Stable** → SDGs 14 (Conserving sea & marine resources), 15 (Life on Land)

India’s Challenges in achieving SDGs

- **Structural Challenges:** Imbalance in economic development; Rapid Urbanisation; Regional variance.
- **Implementation Challenges:** Financing SDGs; Systemic Weaknesses; Lack of access to resources; Lack of awareness and poor participation by marginalized communities.
- **Monitoring Challenges:** Defining Indicators; Monitoring outcomes; Measuring Progress.

Way ahead to overcome the barriers in achieving SDGs

- **Localizing SDGs:** NITI Aayog should make regular interventions to facilitate entrepreneurship, innovation and new-age leadership on various development fronts.
- **Need to refashion Education, Employment and Human Resource Development:** Invest in and enhance quality and accessibility of health care, especially for the economically weaker sections and people in vulnerable situations.
- **Promoting women's entrepreneurship:** For inclusive procurement both in public and private sector.
- **Invest in new and resilient infrastructure.**
- **Enhance funding** for timely achievement of SDGs targets.
- **Focus on 3As (Awareness, Action & Accountability)** to improve the accuracy of the indicator measurement and avoid double counting.

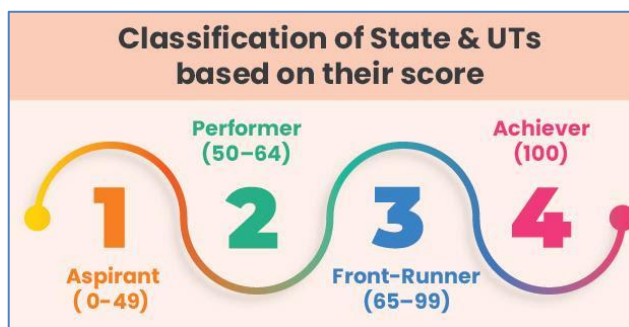
7.3.1. SDG INDIA INDEX 2021: NITI AAYOG

Why in news?

Recently, the third edition of the report titled ‘Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and Dashboard 2020–21: Partnerships in the Decade of Action’ was released by NITI Aayog.

Key Findings of the report

- India’s overall score across SDGs improved marginally from 60 in 2019 to 66 in 2021 on accounts of improvement in performance in providing facilities including clean water and sanitation (Goal 6), affordable and clean energy (Goal 7) among others.
 - However, there has been a major decline in the areas of industry, innovation and infrastructure as well as decent work and economic growth.
- Kerala retains top rank followed by Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu while Bihar is at bottom followed by Jharkhand and Assam.
- Chandigarh maintained its top spot among the UTs followed by Delhi.
- Mizoram, Haryana, and Uttarakhand are the top gainers in 2020–21 in terms of improvement in score from 2019.
- In 2019, 10 states and UTs belonged to the category of Front-Runners while in 2021, 12 more states and UTs made it to the category.



What is SDG India Index?

- It was first launched by NITI Aayog in 2018. The index has become the primary tool for monitoring progress of India’s states and its Union territories (UTs) towards the SDGs for 2030. It provides a holistic view on the social, economic and environmental status of the country and its States and UTs.
 - The Index for SDGs evaluates progress of states and Union Territories (UTs) on various parameters including health, education, gender, economic growth, institutions, climate change and environment.
- Methodology of SDG India Index:**
 - The SDG India Index computes goal-wise scores on the 16 SDGs for each State and UT.
 - Overall State and UT scores are generated from goal-wise scores to measure aggregate performance of the sub-national unit based on its performance across the 16 SDGs.
 - These scores range between 0–100, and if a State/UT achieves a score of 100, it signifies it has achieved the 2030 targets.
 - The higher the score of a State/UT, the greater the distance to target achieved.

Significance of the Index

- The index is developed in collaboration with the United Nations in India.
- It has fostered competition among the states and UTs by ranking them on the global goals.
- It tracks the progress of all states and UTs on 115 indicators aligned with the National Indicator Framework (NIF) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
 - NIF aims to give appropriate direction to the policy makers and the implementers of various schemes and programs.
 - The 115 indicators incorporate 16 out of 17 SDGs, with a qualitative assessment on Goal 17, and cover 70 SDG targets.
- The index is a key tool for focused policy dialogue, formulation, and implementation through development actions, in line with the global SDG framework.
- It helps in identifying crucial gaps related to tracking the SDGs and the need for India to develop its statistical systems.

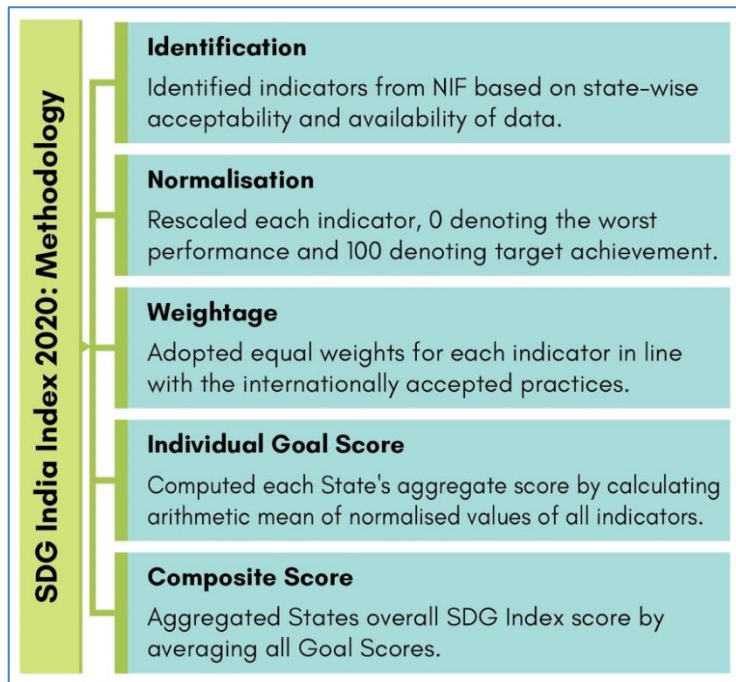
Limitations of the Index

- The Index does not measure indicators of SDG 17 owing to the unavailability of suitable data at the State/UT level. However, a qualitative assessment of the progress under SDG 17 has been included.

- The full set of the NIF could not be included due to the unavailability of data at the State/UT level.
- The indicators and data from State/UT statistical systems and non-government sources have not been included.
- For some indicators, data for all States/UTs are not available. In computing the Index, 'Null' has been assigned to these States/ UTs and they have not been included in the computation.

Conclusion

SDG India Index and Dashboard represents efforts in encouraging evidence-based policymaking by supporting States and UTs to benchmark their progress, identify the priority areas and share good practice. It throws light on how collaborative initiatives can result in better outcomes and greater impacts and serves as a holistic framework to measure the absolute as well as relative progress of the country in achieving the SDGs.



7.3.2. SDG INVESTOR MAP FOR INDIA

Why in News?

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with Invest India has developed the Sustainable Development Group (SDG) Investor Map for India.

More about News

- SDG Investor Map identifies Investment Opportunity Areas (IOAs), and White Spaces (Areas of Potential aimed at aiding India's journey at fulfilling the SDG).
- 18 IOAs and 8 White Spaces are identified across 6 Priority Sectors:
 - Education,
 - Healthcare,
 - Agriculture and Allied Services,
 - Financial Services,
 - Renewable Energy and Alternatives,
 - Sustainable Environment.
- These sectors are identified on the basis of Enhanced productivity, technology adoption and increased inclusion.
- The Map will help public and private sector stake-holders direct capital towards these IOA's and White Spaces that can contribute to the nationally determined sustainable development needs of the country.

The map also highlights the SDG financing gap. With the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, SDG financing gap has widened by an estimated \$400 billion in developing countries, adding to the pre-COVID shortfall of \$2-2.5 trillion per annum.

About SDG Financing

- SDG financing means channelling global financial flows towards Sustainable Development imperative to achieving the 2030 Agenda.
- Addis Ababa Action Agenda 2015 provides a global framework for financing sustainable development that aligns all financing flows and policies with economic, social, and environmental priorities.
- India occupies a key role in determining the success of the SDGs globally and it needs \$2.64 trillion investment to meet SDGs.
 - India needs to increase its SDG spending by an additional 6.2% of its GDP until 2030. Hence, it is crucial to make sure that the budget allocations align with SDG priorities.

- **SDG financing Initiatives:**
 - **SDG Financing Lab** is an OECD-led initiative that strives to inform decision-makers and policy leaders on how to ensure the resources needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda.
 - **SDG Fund** is an international multi-donor and multi-agency development mechanism created in 2014 by the United Nations to support sustainable development activities through integrated and multidimensional joint programmes.
- However, despite growing momentum for sustainable development investments, **financing gaps remain large.**

Issues in SDG financing

- **Heightened geopolitical tensions around trade and technology:** For example, rise in unilateral actions, trade tensions and protectionist measures that largely circumvent multilateral processes.
- **Growing external debt amidst unresolved systemic issues:** Global debt levels have continued to set new records and grew to 247 trillion US dollars in July 2019, up from 168 trillion US dollars in 2008 at the start of financial crisis
- **Unmet expectations about public-private collaboration for development finance:** In particular investments in LDCs have been insufficient to meet their SDG financing needs. Only 7% of 81 billion US dollars in private finance mobilized for development went to LDCs (2012-15).
- **Constraints to finance SDGs in India include:** Inefficiency of tax systems, lack of incentives driving private sector participation, lack of business models supporting SDGs.

How to address SDG financing Gap?

- **Address trade issues:** To put trade back on track, there is a need to put sustainable development at the heart of the multilateral trade regime, building on existing experience from the investment regime and regional trade agreements.
- **Reduce rising debt vulnerabilities:** There is a need to promote the UNCTAD Principles for Responsible Sovereign Lending and borrowing, explore Sovereign Debt Restructuring Mechanisms for countries in default, and create a well-endowed global climate disaster fund and decarbonization bank.
- **Public-private collaboration for development finance:**
 - **Public sector role:** Remove inefficiencies in tax system, allocation of tax to implement SDGs, Augment new sources such as sovereign bonds for SDGs, reducing illicit financial flows, infrastructure finance and capital market development, Foreign Direct Investment promotion etc.
 - **Private sector role:** Incentivize private sector investment, Crowd in private investment through innovative facilities and business models etc.
- **Maximize investment impact:** increasing the sustainable development benefits and minimizing the risks of investment in SDG sectors.
- **Channel investment:** promoting and facilitating investment into SDG sectors.

7.4. PATERNITY LEAVE

Why in news?

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) granted paternity leave to the Indian captain.

What is paternity leave?

- Paternity leave is a **leave period (paid) reserved exclusively for fathers in relation to childbirth** and it is granted in addition to the other annual leaves.

WHERE FATHERS GET THE MOST PAID PARENTAL LEAVE



- **Paternity leave in India**
 - There is **no legal provision for paternity leave** in India.
 - **All India and Central Civil Services Rules** allow Central government employees **with less than two surviving children** and even for adopted children 15 days of paternity leave.
 - **Private organisations:** Certain private establishments like **Zomato India** provide paternity leaves.
 - **In Chander Mohan Jain v. N.K Bagrodia Public School, 2009** the Delhi High Court held that "all male employees of unaided recognized private schools were entitled to paternity leave."
UNICEF provides sixteen weeks of paternity leaves to its male employees.

Significance of paternity leave

- **Emotional need of the child:** A child requires equal support from both parents in the first 1,000 days (ILO).
- **Health of the mother:** Father's ability to stay home may help mother to cope up with the postpartum depression and anxiety symptoms among others.
- **Nuclearisation of family:** The level of child-care support to the mother from extended family members is much less available nowadays. The gap could be filled by the presence of the father.
- **Bridging the gender gap at home for facilitating gender equality at the workplace.**

Challenges in paternity leave

- **Lack of will power among employers:** Many organisations do not provide even maternity leave which is statutorily backed by the Maternity Benefit (amendment) Act 2017.
- **Funding:** Public exchequer has its own limitations while private organizations may not be willing to bear any extra cost.
- **Patriarchal society:** Indian Men perform only 10% of the unpaid care work and more than 80% believe that taking care of the child is the primary responsibility of the mother (ILO).

Way ahead

- **Universalise the Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS) project:** It is a gender sensitization programme for 12-14-year young school kids being implemented in the public schools of Maharashtra from 2010.
- **Behavioural changes:** For ensuring active role of male partner before, during and after the child birth.
- **Paternity Benefit Bill, 2018:** It pushes for equal 'parental' **benefits for both the mother and the father**. It aims to cover the **organised sector, the unorganized sector and the self-employed**. It also **creates a Parental Benefit Scheme Fund** which will be utilized to meet the costs related to paternity benefits.

Copyright © by Vision IAS

All rights are reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of Vision IAS.

10 IN TOP 10 SELECTIONS IN CSE 2020

from various programs of *Vision IAS*



1
AIR

SHUBHAM KUMAR
(GS FOUNDATION BATCH
CLASSROOM STUDENT)



2
AIR

JAGRATI AWASTHI
(ALL INDIA
TEST SERIES)



3
AIR

ANKITA JAIN
(ALL INDIA
TEST SERIES)



4
AIR

**YASH
JALUKA**
(ABHYAAS
TEST SERIES)



5
AIR

**MAMTA
YADAV**
(ALL INDIA
TEST SERIES)



6
AIR

**MEERA
K**
(ALL INDIA
TEST SERIES)



7
AIR

**PRAVEEN
KUMAR**
(ALL INDIA TEST SERIES)
ESSAY TEST, ABHYAAS, PDP)



8
AIR

**JIVANI KARTIK
NAGJIBHAI**
(GS FOUNDATION BATCH
CLASSROOM STUDENT)



9
AIR

**APALA
MISHRA**
(ABHYAAS
TEST SERIES)



10
AIR

**SATYAM
GANDHI**
(ALL INDIA TEST
SERIES, EASSY TEST)



**YOU CAN
BE
NEXT**



DELHI

HEAD OFFICE Apsara Arcade, 1/8-B, 1st Floor,
Near Gate 6, Karol Bagh Metro Station

+91 8468022022, +91 9019066066

Mukherjee Nagar Centre

635, Opp. Signature View Apartments,
Banda Bahadur Marg, Mukherjee Nagar



JAIPUR

9001949244



HYDERABAD

9000104133



PUNE

8007500096



AHMEDABAD

9909447040



LUCKNOW

8468022022



CHANDIGARH

8468022022



GUWAHATI

8468022022



/c/VisionIASdelhi



/vision_ias



/visionias_upsc



/VisionIAS_UPSC