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II**

SOCIAL JUSTICE

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APTI PLUS

EDUCATION

ASER Survey

Context

- It provides a glimpse into the levels of learning loss that students in rural India are suffering, with varying levels of access to technology, school and family resources resulting in a digital divide in education.

Findings of the survey

- About **20% of rural children have no textbooks at home.**
- Inter-state variation:**
 - In Andhra Pradesh, **less than 35% of children had textbooks**, and only 60% had textbooks in Rajasthan.
 - More than **98% had textbooks in West Bengal, Nagaland and Assam.**
- Levels of **Smartphone ownership have almost doubled from 2018, but a third of children with Smartphone access still did not** receive any learning materials.
- It found that 5.3% of rural children aged 6-10 years had not yet enrolled in school this year, in comparison to just 1.8% in 2018.
- Shift towards government school:**
 - Enrolment patterns also show a slight shift toward government schools, with private schools seeing a drop in enrolment in all age groups.
- Smartphone:**
 - In 2018, ASER surveyors found that about 36% of rural households with school-going children had smart phones.
 - By 2020, that figure had spiked to 62%. About 11% of families bought a new phone after the lockdown, of which 80% were smartphones.
- WhatsApp was by far the most popular mode of transmitting learning materials** to students, with 75% of students who got some input receiving it via the messaging app.

About ASER:

- ASER is a **nationwide survey of rural education and learning outcomes** in terms of reading and arithmetic skills that has been conducted by the **NGO Pratham for the last 15 years.**
- This year, the survey was **conducted via phone calls**, reaching 52,227 rural households with school age children in 30 States and Union Territories.

Pragyata Guidelines

Context

- Central government has set norms for Digital Education through Pragyata guidelines.

About the guidelines

- Released by the **Ministry of Education.**
- Prepared by the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)**
- Advisory** in nature.
- State government can form their own rules** as per local requirement.

About NCERT

ABOUT IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is an autonomous organization set up in 1961 by the Government of India. The main work of NCERT is to assist and advise the Central and State Governments on qualitative improvement in school education.
OBJECTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake, aid, promote and coordinate research in areas related to school education. Prepare and publish model textbooks, supplementary material, newsletters, journals and other related literature. Organize pre-service and in-service training of teachers. Develop and disseminate innovative educational techniques and practices.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate and network with state educational departments, universities, NGOs and other educational institutions. Act as a clearinghouse for ideas and information in matters related to school education. Act as a nodal agency for achieving goals of universalisation of elementary education.
PRESIDENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Union Education Minister

Important highlights of guidelines

- For classes 1-8: Time limit to hold live online classes is **maximum 1.5 hours per day**.
- For kindergarten, nursery and pre-school: **only 30 minutes** of screen time per day for interacting with parents.
- For classes 9-12: Three hours per day.
- Schools will first survey their own students before making decisions about the mode of teaching.
- "Asynchronous learning" with tools to allow students to download lessons.
- Promote learning through listening to radio and TV programmes
- Communicate through Whatsapp and SMS.
- Undertake creative projects.

Manodarpan Initiative

About

- An initiative under the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**
- Launched by** Union Human Resource Development (HRD) ministry.

Objective

- Provide **psycho- social support and counselling to students for their mental health and well- being**.

Components

- A toll-free national helpline number (8448440632),
- Advisory guidelines
- Web page
- National level database and directory of counsellors
- National Toll-free helpline number
- Interactive online chat option

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Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)-ICREST

Launched by

- Atal Innovation Mission of NITI Aayog

Objective

- Encourage and enable **holistic progress in the incubator ecosystem across the country.**
- Advancing innovation at large scale.

Working

- NITI Aayog is working with **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wadhvani Foundation** to up-scale and provides requisite support to foster the incubation-enterprise economy.

ATAL INNOVATION MISSION

- Flagship initiative set up by the **NITI Aayog to promote innovation and entrepreneurship.**
- Play an important role in **alignment of innovation policies between central, state and sectoral innovation schemes.**
- Long-term goals** of AIM include establishment and promotion of Small Business Innovation Research and Development at a national scale (AIM SBIR) for the SME/MSME/start-ups.

National Education Policy 2020

Key Highlights

Multidisciplinary Institution

- By 2040, all higher education institutions (HEIs) shall aim to become multidisciplinary institutions, each of which will aim to have 3,000 or more students.
- Aims at setting up at least one large multidisciplinary institution in or near every district by the year 2030.
- Under Graded Autonomy, Academic, Administrative & Financial Autonomy will be given to colleges, on the basis of the status of their accreditation.

Undergraduate degree courses

- The undergraduate degree courses will be of either 3 or 4- year duration, with multiple exit options.
- A certificate course after completing 1 year in a discipline or field, including vocational and professional areas, or a diploma after 2 years of study, or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme.
- An **Academic Bank of Credit (ABC)** shall be established which would digitally store the academic credits earned.
- Aims at **50% gross enrolment ratio by 2035.**
- There will be **multiple entry and exit options** for those who wish to leave the course in the middle.
- The National Testing Agency (NTA) will offer a **high-quality common aptitude test**, as well as specialized common subject exams in the sciences, humanities, languages, arts, and vocational subjects, at least twice every year for university entrance exams.

Interaction with Foreign Institutions

- An International Students Office at each institution hosting foreign students will be set up.
- The HRD Ministry has been renamed as **Education Ministry.**
- High performing Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries.

Vocational Education

- The Education Ministry, would constitute a National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education (NCIVE).
- Students will get 360-degree holistic report card, which will not only inform about the marks obtained by them in subjects, but also their skills and other important points.
- Every child to learn at least one vocation and exposed to several more.

- By 2025, at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education
- A **10-day bag less period** sometime during Grades 6-8 to intern with local vocational experts such as carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists, etc.

National Research Foundation

- A National Research Foundation (NRF) will be established to enable a culture of research to permeate through universities.
- The NRF will be governed independently of the government, by a rotating Board of Governors consisting of the very best researchers and innovators across fields.

Vernacular Language

- Proposes the setting up of an **Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (ITI)** while also laying significant emphasis on Sanskrit and other Indian languages.
- There will **e- content in regional language** apart from English and Hindi.

Learning plan

A look at the key features of the new education policy:

■ R.V.S. PRASAD



- Public spending on education by States, Centre to be raised to 6% of GDP
- Ministry of Human Resource Development to be renamed Ministry of Education
- Separate technology unit to develop digital education resources



SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Universalisation from age 3 to Class 10 by 2030
- Mission to ensure literacy and numeracy skills by 2025
- Mother tongue as medium of instruction till Class 5 wherever possible
- New curriculum to include 21st century skills like coding and vocational integration from Class 6
- Board exams to be easier, redesigned



HIGHER EDUCATION

- New umbrella regulator for all higher education except medical, legal courses
- Flexible, holistic, multi-disciplinary UG degrees of 3-4 years' duration
- 1 to 2 year PG programmes, no M.Phil
- College affiliation system to be phased out in 15 years

Online Education

- **Quality technology-based options** for adult learning such as apps, online courses/modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centres, etc. will be developed.
- A dedicated unit for the purpose of orchestrating the building of digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be created in the MHRD to look after the e-education needs of both school and higher education.

School Structure

- The extant 10+2 structure in school education will be modified with a new pedagogical and curricular restructuring of 5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18.
- In the new 5+3+3+4 structure, a strong base of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) from age 3 is also included.
- Students of class 6 and onwards will be taught coding in schools as a part of 21st century skills.

Digital drive

The new education policy has emphasised the integration of technology in all levels of learning. Some features of the policy:

Technology in education

- An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum, will be created for the exchange of ideas on use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning and administration
- A dedicated unit for the purpose of creating digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be set up in the ministry
- Integration of technology will be done to improve classroom processes

Teacher education

- By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a four-year integrated B.Ed. degree

Financial support

- Meritorious students belonging to SC, ST, OBC and other socially and economically disadvantaged groups will be given incentives
- Private institutions will be encouraged to offer scholarships to their students

Professional education

- Standalone technical universities, health science universities, legal and agricultural universities will aim at becoming multi-disciplinary institutions



Exam Structure

- In order to reduce the importance and stress of board exam, exam will be conducted in two parts: Objective and descriptive.

- Exam can be conducted twice a year. Board exam should promote knowledge application rather than rote learning.

Small Age Children

- A National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCPFECCE) for children up to the age of 8 will be developed by NCERT.
- The planning and implementation of early childhood care and education curriculum (ECCEC) will be carried out jointly by the Ministries of HRD, Women and Child Development (WCD), Health and Family Welfare (HFW), and Tribal Affairs.
- Prior to the age of 5 every child will move to a "Preparatory Class" or "Balvatika" that is, before Class 1), which has an ECCE-qualified teacher.

Gifted Children

- The nutrition and health including mental health) of children will be addressed, through healthy meals and regular health check-ups.
- **NIOS will develop** high-quality modules to teach **Indian Sign Language**, and to teach other basic subjects using Indian Sign Language.

National Institution Ranking Framework

- This framework outlines a methodology to rank institutions across the country.
- It was initiated in 2015 by MHRD (Ministry of Human resource and development).
- First ranking was released in 2016.
- Parameters:
 - Teaching
 - Learning and Resources
 - Research and Professional Practices
 - Graduation Outcomes
 - Outreach and Inclusivity
 - Perception
- In 2020, IIT Madras is the top institution in government ranking.

Digital Education Programmes by GOI

SWAYAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integrated platform for offering online courses and covering school (9th to 12th) to Post Graduate Level. • NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) has been developing course modules for school education system in 12 subject areas.
SWAYAM PRABHA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative to provide 32 High Quality Educational Channels through DTH. • Curriculum-based course content covering diverse disciplines.
NATIONAL DIGITAL LIBRARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project to develop a framework of virtual repository of learning resources with a single-window search facility. • There are more than three crores digital resources available through the NDL.
SPOKEN TUTORIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-minute long, audio-video tutorial, on open source software, to improve employment potential of students. • The languages are C, C++, Java, PHP, Python, PERL, Scilab, OpenFOAM, OpenModelica, DWSIM, LibreO and many more.
E-YANTRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project for enabling effective education across engineering colleges in India on embedded systems and Robotics. • The training for teachers and students is imparted through workshops where participants are taught basics of embedded systems and programming.
PM eVIDYA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive initiative to unify all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode and equitable access to education for students and teachers.
SWAYAM MOOCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are online courses relating to NIOS.

Institutions of Eminence' Scheme

Context

- The new guidelines have been issued in line with the new National Education Policy (NEP) as per which foreign universities will be allowed to set up campuses in India and top Indian institutes in foreign countries.
- Indian universities and colleges with the Institutions of Eminence (IOEs) tag, which include several IITs, will now be able to set up campuses in foreign countries with the University Grants Commission (UGC) issuing fresh guidelines on the same.

Background

- It is a recognition scheme to empower higher education institutes in India. It was first announced in 2016 Union budget.

Objectives of IoE Scheme

- To provide an **enabling regulatory architecture to ten public and ten private Higher Educational** institutions to emerge as world-class teaching and research institutions.
- To provide a robust higher education system to become leaders in excellence and innovations
- To engage in areas of specialization to make distinctive contributions to the university education system.
- To enhance **affordable access to high quality education** for ordinary Indians.
- To compete in the global tertiary education marketplace through the acquisition and creation of advanced knowledge.

Selection Criteria

- UGC had constituted an Empowered Expert Committee (EEC) under N. Gopalasamy chairmanship; to recommend a list of institutions on the basis of following criteria:
- Institutions, which have figured in the **top 500 of QS World University Rankings or top 50 of the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) rankings**, shall be recommended for the IoE status.
- Yet to be established (Greenfield Institution) will also be recommended.
- They would get 3-year period to establish and operationalise, and thereafter, EEC will consider giving IoE status to such institutions.



Benefits granted under IOE scheme

- Funding:** Government Institutions will get additional funding upto 1000 Cr. Private Institutions proposed, as IoE will not get any financial support.
- More Autonomy:** The selected Institutions under IoE shall have

- Complete **financial autonomy** to spend the resources raised and allocated, subject to general conditions & restrictions of the Statutes.
 - Freedom to fix and charge fees from foreign students without restriction.
 - Freedom to determine the domestic student fees, subject to the condition that no student who gets selected admission is turned away for lack of finance.
- **Complete academic and administrative autonomy**
 - Flexibility in fixing of curriculum and syllabus, with no UGC mandated curriculum structure.
 - UGC Inspection shall not apply to IoE.
 - Freedom to enter into academic collaborations with foreign higher educational institutions (in top 500) without government approval.
 - Freedom to hire personnel from industry, etc, as faculty who are experts in their areas but may not have the requisite higher academic qualifications
 - Freedom to recruit faculty from outside India
 - Freedom to enter into academic collaborations with other Institutions within the country
 - Freedom to have own transparent merit based system for admission of students.
 - Freedom to admit additionally foreign students on merit subject to a maximum of 30% of the strength of admitted domestic students.
 - Freedom to offer courses within a program as well as to offer degrees in newer areas.
 - Freedom to offer online courses as part of their programmes with a restriction that not more than 20% of the programme should be in online mode.

Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)

- Launched by Ministry of Human Resource Development
- Aims at **improving the research ecosystem** of India's higher educational institution.
- **Facilitates academic and research collaborations** between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world.
- National Coordination Institute: Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur
- 5 Thrust areas:
 - Fundamental Research,
 - Emergent Areas of Impact,
 - Convergence,
 - Action-Oriented Research
 - Innovation-Driven

Education for Tribal Students

Context

- The Odisha Government is constructing three **mega educational complexes exclusively for tribal students** to provide academic and sporting skills.

Data

	ST		All India	
Literacy rate (Census 2011)	63		74	
Gender Parity Index	0.96		0.96	
Drop Out rate (Class I-X)	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
	70.6	71.3	50.4	47.9

Government Steps to improve the Tribal Education

- **Up gradation of Merit of ST Students** to upgrade the merit of ST students by providing them remedial and special coaching in classes IX to XII.
- **Vocational Training Centres in Tribal Areas** to upgrade the skills of the tribal youth in various traditional/modern vocations depending upon their educational qualification, present economic trends and the market potential.

- **National Overseas Scholarships for Scheduled Tribe Students** to provide financial assistance to meritorious students for pursuing higher studies in foreign university in specified files of Master Level Courses, PhD and Post-Doctoral research programmes, in the field of Engineering, Technology and Science.
- **Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Areas** to provide residential schools for Scheduled Tribes including PVTGs to increase their literacy rate.
- **The Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** for ST students take their place among the JawaharNavodayaVidyalayas, the Kasturba Gandhi BalikaVidyalayas and the KendriyaVidyalayas.

SAMARTH

Context

- **Ministry of Education** has developed an e-Governance platform, SAMARTH Enterprises Resource Planning (ERP), under **National Mission of Education in Information and Communication Technology Scheme (NMEICT)**.

About SAMARTH

- It is an **Open Standard Open Source Architecture, Secure, Scalable and Evolutionary Process Automation Engine for Universities and Higher Educational Institutions**.
- It caters to faculty, students and staff at a **University/Higher Educational Institutions**.

Steps taken by Government to promote e-learning in India:

The Government of India has launched several programs to spread digital literacy, create a knowledge-based society in India, and implement three principles 'access, equity and quality' of the Education Policy.

- **Digital India Mission**
- **e-Basta:** Schools books in digital form
- **e-Education:** All schools connected with broadband and free Wi-Fi in all schools and develop MOOCs - develop pilot Massive Online Open Courses
- **Nand Ghars:** Digital tools as teaching aids
- **SWAYAM** (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds): MOOCs based on curriculum taught in classrooms from 9th class till post-graduation
- **India Skills Online:** Learning portal for skill training

Stars Project

Context

- Agreement for the financial support of the implementation of Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS) project of Ministry of Education was signed between Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) and World Bank along with Ministry of Education.
- The total project cost of STARS project is Rs 5718 crores with the **financial support of World Bank amounting to approximately Rs. 3700 crores** and rest coming as State share from the participating States, over a period of 5 years.
- STARS project would be implemented as a new **Centrally Sponsored Scheme under Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), MOE**.
- The project covers 6 States viz **Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha**.
- The identified States will be supported for various interventions for improving the quality of education.
- The Program envisions **improving the overall monitoring and measurement activities in the Indian school education system** through interventions in selected states.
- STARS will draw on existing structure under Samagra Shiksha with the DoSEL, MoE as the main implementing agency at the national level.
- At the State level, the project will be implemented through the **integrated State Implementation Society (SIS) for SamagraShiksha**.

- The proposed World Bank support under STARS is primarily in the form of a **results-based financing instrument called Program for Results (PforR)**.
- **An independent Verification agency (IVA)** will verify each result before disbursement of funds.
- **Significance:** STARS project will be instrumental in the implementation of various recommendations of National Education Policy 2020 i.e. Strengthening Early Childhood Education and Foundational Learning, Improving Learning Assessment System, ICT-enabled approaches in education, Teachers Development and Vocational education etc.

VULNERABLE SECTION

Convention 182 of International Labour Organization (ILO)

Context

- Kingdom of Tonga has ratified Convention 182 of International Labor Organisation.

About Convention 182

- The two ILO Conventions on child labour are
 - **Convention No.138 on Minimum Age and**
 - **Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.**
- ILO Convention No. 182 is the **first ILO Convention to achieve universal ratification**.
- It was adopted in 1999.
- It **prohibits the sexual exploitation of children, trafficking, deployment in armed conflict** and other conditions that compromise their overall well-being.
- **The Convention complements the ILO's efforts under the 1973 Minimum Age Convention** to prevent the employment of children below a lower age threshold.
- India is signatory to both the conventions.

About International Labour Organization (ILO):

- The **only tripartite U.N. agency**, since 1919 the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States.
- It sets labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.
- The ILO became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946.

Section 29 of the Pocso Act

Context

- The Delhi High Court has ruled that the presumption of guilt engrafted in Section 29 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act **applies only once trial begins**, that is after charges are framed against the accused.
- **Section 29 of the POCSO Act:** It says that when a person is prosecuted for committing an offence of sexual assault against a minor, the **special court trying the case "shall presume" the accused to be guilty**.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act

- The Act is gender neutral and regards the best interests and welfare of the child as a matter of paramount importance at every stage so as to ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.
- The Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age.
- It defines different forms of sexual abuse, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography, and deems a sexual assault to be "aggravated" under certain circumstances, such as when the abused child is mentally ill or when the abuse is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority vis-à-vis the child, like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor.

- People who traffic children for sexual purposes are also punishable under the provisions relating to abetment in the Act.
- The Act prescribes stringent punishment graded as per the gravity of the offence, with a maximum term of rigorous imprisonment for life, and fine.
- It defines "child pornography" as any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a child, which includes photograph, video, digital, or computer generated image.
- The Act provides for the establishment of Special Courts for trial of offences under the Act.
- The Act recognizes that the Intent to commit an offence, even when unsuccessful for whatever reason, needs to be penalized.
- The attempt to commit an offence under the Act has been made liable for punishment for up to half the punishment prescribed for the commission of the offence.
- The Act also provides for punishment for abetment of the offence, which is the same as for the commission of the offence.

Key factors

Real-life considerations for court while deciding bail

Age of the minor victim: The younger the victim, the more heinous the offence alleged

Age of the accused: The older the accused, the more heinous the offence alleged

Comparative age of victim and accused: The more their age difference, the more the element of perversion in the offence alleged



Familial relationship: The closer such relationship, the more odious the offence alleged

WHAT DOES SECTION 29 OF THE POCSO ACT SAY

When a person is prosecuted for committing an offence of sexual assault against a minor, the special court trying the case "shall presume" the accused to be guilty

Crimes against persons with disabilities

Context

- A group of over 90 disability rights organisations, activists and academics has written to Union Home Minister, urging that the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) maintain data of the violent crimes committed against persons with disabilities.
- The United Nations committee monitoring the implementation of the U.N. Convention on Rights of PwD had recommended to the government in 2019 to ensure that the NCRB collected disaggregated data by sex, age, place of residence, relationship with perpetrator and disability in case of violence and exploitation of women and girls with disabilities.

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The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- It is an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to **protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities**.
- Parties to the Convention are required to promote, protect, and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and ensure that **persons with disabilities enjoy full equality under the law**.
- **The Convention was the first U.N. human rights treaty of the twenty-first century.**
- There are eight guiding principles that underlie the Convention, delineated in Article 3:
 - Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons
 - Non-discrimination
 - Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
 - Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
 - Equality of opportunity
 - Accessibility
 - Equality between men and women
 - Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities

NCRB

- It is mandated to function as a **national repository of crime and criminal related data** in the country.
- NCRB is part of the Ministry of **Home Affairs (MHA)**, Government of India.
- **Objectives:**
 - Create and maintain secure sharable National Databases on crimes and criminals for law enforcement agencies and promote their use for public service delivery.
 - Collect and process crime statistics at the national level and **clearing house of information on crime and criminals both at National and International levels**.
 - Lead and coordinate development of IT applications and create an enabling IT environment for Police organizations.
 - **National repository of fingerprints of all criminals.**
 - To evaluate, modernize and promote automation in State Crime Records Bureaux and State Finger Print Bureaux.
 - **Training and capacity building** in Police Forces in Information Technology and Finger Print Science.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

Context

- The Supreme Court has sought a response from the country's apex child rights body, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), to its request to eight States to "produce" children living in care homes before the local child welfare committees for their "immediate repatriation" with their families."

About NCPCR:

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament, the **Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005**.
- The Commission works under the aegis of the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.
- The Commission is mandated under section 13 of CPCR Act, 2005 "to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child."

SERB-POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research)

Context

- Union minister launched DST initiative SERB – POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research)
- It is a scheme to **mitigate gender disparity in science and engineering research funding in various S&T programs in Indian academic institutions and R&D laboratories.**
- Enhancement of participation and promotion of women in the research workforce is one of the prime priorities of our Government.

Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)

- It is a statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.
- SERB – POWER Scheme will have two components
 - (i) SERB-POWER Fellowship
 - (ii) SERB- POWER Research Grants

The salient features of each of these are as follows

- **Target:** Women researchers in 35-55 years of age. Up-to 25 Fellowships per year and not more than 75 at any point in time.
- **Components of support:** Fellowship of Rs. 15,000/- per month in addition to regular income; Research grant of Rs. 10 lakh per annum; and Overhead of Rs. 90,000/- per annum.
- **Duration:** Three years, without the possibility of extension.

Council for Transgenders

Context

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has constituted the National Council for Transgender Persons.

Framework of the Council

- Formed under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
- Headed by: The Union Social Justice Minister.
- Members: Comprises representatives from 10 central departments, Representatives from five states or union territories, on a rotational basis, Five members of the community and five experts from non-governmental organisations.
- Tenure of the community members and experts shall be three years.

Functions

- According to the legislation, the council has five main functions:
 - Advising the central government on the formulation of policies, programmes, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons.
 - Monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies and programmes designed for achieving equality and full participation of transgender persons.
 - Reviewing and coordinating the activities of all the departments.

- Redressing grievances of transgender persons.
- Performing such other functions as prescribed by the Centre.

About Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

Objectives of the Act

- To uplift and empower transgender persons by mitigating social stigma, social exclusion, abuse and crimes against them.
- To bring this marginalised section into mainstream society in order to build an inclusive society
- To make all stakeholders more responsive
- To make enforcement agencies more accountable for their actions especially when they are dealing with transgender persons.

Key provisions of the Act

- **Defined a transgender person:** As one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth, which includes trans-men, trans-women, persons with intersex variations and gender-queers.
- **Protection:** It **prohibits discrimination** against transgender persons in educational institutions, government establishments, and while renting or purchasing property, receiving healthcare and using public services.
- **Right of residence** is granted to every transgender person. If immediate family is unable to provide care then on court orders a transgender person may be placed in a rehabilitation centre.
- **Self-identity certification:** A transgender person may make an application to the **District Magistrate** for a certificate of identity. In case person undergoes a sex reassignment surgery, then one must apply for another certificate to change their gender identity.
- **Punishment:** Causing harm of any kind, including physical or sexual abuse, to a transgender person, could attract punishment from six months and extend up to two years.
- **National Council for Transgender Persons** will be formed to advise the government on formulating policies for the community, monitor its implementation and will address grievances
- **Health and education facility:** Centre will provide **healthcare services, including sex reassignment surgery and hormonal therapy**. Educational institutions funded or recognised by the relevant government shall provide **inclusive education, sports and recreational facilities for transgender persons**.

Jaya Jaitley Task Force

Context

- The task force set up to take a re-look at the age of marriage for women has submitted its report to the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Minimum age for marriage in India

- Minimum age is essential to outlaw child marriages and prevent the abuse of minors.
- Section 5(iii) of the **Hindu Marriage Act, 1955** sets **18 years** as the minimum age for the bride and **21 years as the minimum age for the groom**.
- In Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid.
- The **Special Marriage Act, 1954** and the **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006** prescribe 18 and 21 years as minimum age for marriage for women and men respectively.
- Sexual intercourse with a minor is rape, and the 'consent' of a minor is considered invalid.

Medical Termination of Pregnancy

Context

- The Delhi High Court allowed a woman's plea to terminate her 28-week pregnancy after a medical board constituted by AIIMS said her foetus could be aborted as it suffered from anencephaly, and was incompatible with life.

Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1971

- The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1971 prohibits abortion of a foetus after 20 weeks of gestation.

What is MTP Act 1971?

- It **legalized abortion in India up to 20 weeks of pregnancy**, based on certain conditions and when provided by a registered medical practitioner at a registered medical facility.
- Conditions under the MTP Act under which a pregnancy may be terminated are
 - continuation of the pregnancy would **involve a risk to the life of the pregnant woman or cause grave injury to her physical or mental health**.
 - substantial risk that the child, if born, would be **seriously handicapped due to physical or mental abnormalities**;
 - pregnancy is caused by **rape** (presumed to constitute grave injury to mental health) and
 - pregnancy is **due to failure of contraceptive** in a married woman or her husband (presumed to constitute grave injury to mental health).

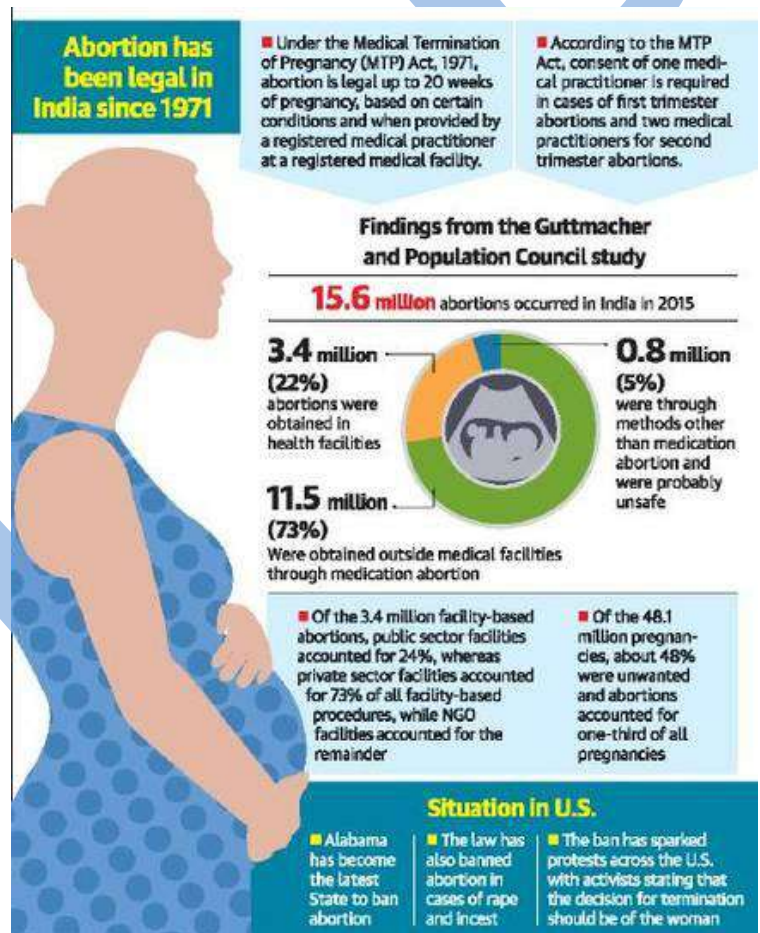
Law on Paternity Leave

Context

- Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli, came back to India after the first Test in Australia, on paternity leave.

Law on paternity leave

- Unlike maternity leave, which is legally mandated, the **private sector is not bound to provide paternity leave in India**.
- There is a legal stipulation for central government employees -- a **"male civil servant (including an apprentice, probationer) with less than two surviving children may be granted Paternity Leave for a period of 15 days before or up to six months from the date of delivery of the child."**
- The **"less than two surviving children"** means the employee can take paternity leaves only for his first two children.
- Among Indian companies, Zomato made news in 2019 when it decided to give a 26-week paternity leave to its employees.
- For women, on the other hand, the law mandates that **female workers of all establishments with 10 or more workers can take 26 weeks of paid leave**, up to eight weeks of which can be claimed before the delivery of the child.



HEALTH

Tobacco Control Laws

Context

- Prominent display of ads of tobacco products in stores makes tobacco control laws ineffective, says report by National Law School of India University (NLSIU).

Key findings

- Even though smoking in public places and advertising of tobacco products are banned under the **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act (COTPA) 2003**, the permission for smoking in designated areas make the existing tobacco control laws “ineffective for regulating tobacco consumption and exposure to second-hand smoke in India,”

WHO FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON TOBACCO CONTROL (WHO FCTC)

- It is the **first international treaty** negotiated under the auspices of WHO.
- It aims to tackle some of the causes of smoking epidemic, including complex factors with cross -border effects, such as trade liberalization and direct foreign investment, tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship beyond national borders, and illicit trade in tobacco products.
- **Govt. of India ratified** the WHO FCTC in 2004, the first ever-international public health treaty focusing on the global public health issue of tobacco control.
- It provides for measures to **reduce the demand as well as supply of tobacco**.

Tobacco Control in India

- **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003:**
 - It has powers of statutory warnings- ‘Cigarette Smoking is Injurious to Health’ to be displayed on cigarette packs and advertisements.
 - It included cigars, bidis, cheroots, pipe tobacco, hookah, chewing tobacco, pan masala, and gutka under its ambit
- **National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP), 2008:**
 - To control tobacco consumption and minimize tobacco consumption related deaths.
 - NTCP is implemented through a three-tier structure of National Tobacco Control Cell (NTCC), State Tobacco Control Cell (STCC) and District Tobacco Control Cell (DTCC) at the Central level State level District levels respectively.
- **Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labelling) Amendment Rules, 2020:**
 - New sets of specified health warnings with enhanced pictorial images to be printed on all tobacco products.
- **mCessation Programme:**
 - It aims at reaching out to those willing to quit tobacco use and support them towards successful quitting through text messages. This is first time in the world that such a two way service is being provided as part of any mHealth initiative.
- **Cable Television Networks Amendment Act of 2000:**
 - Prohibited the transmission of advertisements on tobacco and liquor in India.
 - The Government of India has also issued regulations under the **Food Safety and Standards Act 2006**, which lay down that tobacco or nicotine cannot be used as ingredients in food products.
- **Tobacco Taxation:**
 - WHO says that cigarette taxes in India are amongst the highest in the world. However, other tobacco products are taxed at lower levels.
 - India has banned foreign direct investment in cigarette manufacturing.

National Digital Health Mission

Context

- National Digital Health Mission has been rolled out in Chandigarh, Ladakh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.

About the Mission

- **Aim:** Every Indian will get the Health ID that will ease access to medical services.
- **Implementing Agency:** The National Health Authority (NHA), the apex agency responsible for the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), has been given the mandate by the government to design, build, roll-out and implement the NDHM in the country.
- Health ID will help in storing of the every medical records of individuals.
- The health ID will contain information about medical data, prescriptions and diagnostic reports and summaries of previous discharge from hospitals for ailments.
- The mission is expected to bring efficiency and transparency in healthcare services in the country.

PARTICIPATION IN SYSTEM TO BE VOLUNTARY

AIMS TO	KEY BUILDING BLOCKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establish digital health systems and managing health data ➤ Improve quality of health data collection, storage and dissemination ➤ Provide a platform for interoperability of healthcare data ➤ Fast-track creation of updated and accurate health registries for the entire country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health ID ● Personal health records ● Digi Doctor ● Health facility registry ● Telemedicine ● e-Pharmacy
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Voluntary participation ● Privacy and security by design ● Inclusivity ● Seamless portability 	

About National Health Authority:

- NHA has been set-up to implement PM-JAY.
- An attached office of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with full functional autonomy, NHA is governed by a Governing Board chaired by the Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare.
- It is headed by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), an officer of the rank of Secretary to the Government of India, who manages its affairs.
- To implement the scheme at the State level, State Health Agencies (SHAs) in the form of a society/trust have been set up by respective States.

Plasma Therapy

About Plasma Therapy

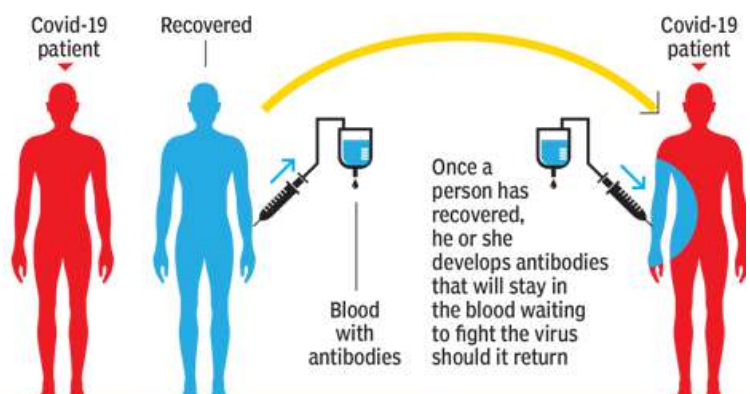
- It involves **infusing patients** suffering from COVID-19 with plasma from recovered patients.
- The antibodies of the recovered person may help that patient's immune system fight the virus.
- The recovered patient's antibodies, once ingested into somebody under treatment, will begin targeting and fighting the novel coronavirus in the second patient.
- It was used in the treatment of the Spanish flu as well as the 2009 H1N1 influenza, SARS and MERS viruses.
- Its effectiveness is yet to be validated

WHAT IS CONVALESCENT PLASMA THERAPY?

It involves transfusing plasma retrieved from the blood of people who have recovered from Covid-19 into people suffering from the disease

How does it work?

As people fight the Covid-19 virus, they produce antibodies that attack the virus. These antibodies are secreted by immune cells known as B lymphocytes, found in plasma or liquid part of blood, which helps the blood clot when needed and supports immunity



How many patients can be treated with plasma from a donor?

One person's donation of plasma can help two people. Scientists say that a patient needs only one transfusion to get enough antibodies to fight the virus

Is it a new treatment?

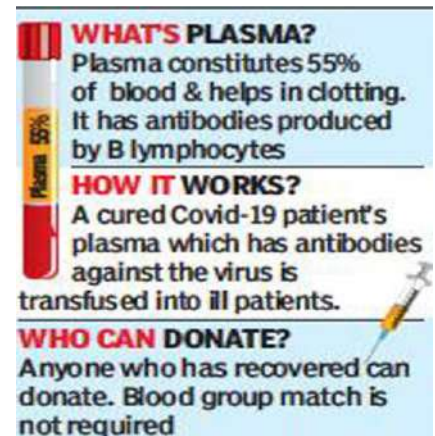
No, it isn't. The idea of using one person's plasma to help another has been used during the outbreak of SARS, also caused by a coronavirus

How many states in India are using it?

None. Delhi, Maharashtra, Kerala and Gujarat, among others, have sought approval from the regulatory bodies for clinical trials

thus cannot be deployed widely without caution.

- Other side effects range from mild reactions like fever, itching, to life threatening allergic reactions and lung injury.
- It is an expensive procedure as it involves high opportunity cost and requires intensive resources, healthy COVID19 survivors to donate, a blood bank with proper machinery and trained personnel to remove plasma, equipment to store it and testing facilities to make sure it has an adequate amount of antibodies.



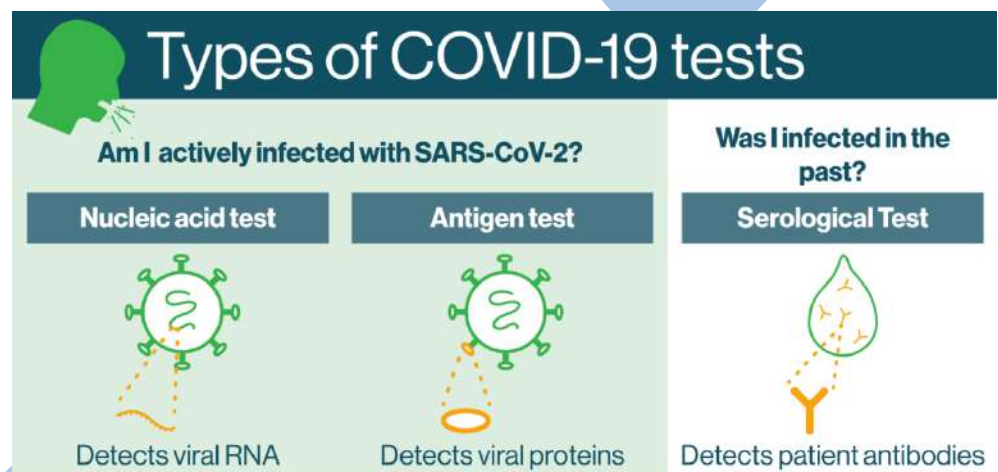
Serological Survey

Context

- Serological surveys, one in Delhi and the other in Mumbai, were conducted.

Serological tests

- Look for **disease-specific antibodies** in an individual.
 - Every infected person, whether **symptomatic** or **otherwise**, develops **antibodies** against the disease.
- These antibodies remain within the person for a prolonged period, possibly for a few months.
- Detection of these antibodies means the person has been infected with the disease at some stage.



Importance of Serological tests

- Make informed decisions about the interventions to be used in order to contain the disease.
- Gives them a better understanding of how dangerous the virus is.

Indian Sars-Cov-2 Genomic Consortia (INSACOG)

Context

- The government has launched the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia (INSACOG), comprising 10 labs namely DBT-NIBMG Kalyani, DBT-ILS Bhubaneswar, ICMR-NIV Pune, DBT-NCCS Pune, CSIR-CCMB Hyderabad, DBT-CDFD Hyderabad, DBT-InSTEM/ NCBS Bengaluru, NIMHANS Bengaluru, CSIR-IGIB Delhi, and NCDC Delhi.
- **Aim:** to monitor the genomic variations in the SARS-CoV-2 on a regular basis through a multi-laboratory network.
- It will
 - Assist in developing potential vaccines in the future.
 - Ascertain the status of new variant of SARS-CoV-2 (SARS-CoV-2 VUI 202012/01) in the country
 - Establish a sentinel surveillance for early detection of genomic variants with public health implication
 - Determine the genomic variants in the unusual events/trends (super-spreader events, high mortality/morbidity trend areas etc.).

- **Coordinated by:** Department of Biotechnology (DBT) along with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Indian Council of Medical Research, and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the strategy and roadmap of the National SARS CoV2 Genome Sequencing Consortium (INSACOG) has been prepared.
- Knowledge generated through this vital research consortium will also assist in **developing diagnostics and potential therapeutics and vaccines in the future.**




Trans Fat

Context

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has capped the amount of trans fatty acids (TFA) in oils and fats to 3% for 2021 and 2% by 2022 from the current permissible limit of 5% through an amendment to the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations.

Revised regulations

- It applies to **edible refined oils, vanaspati (partially hydrogenated oils), margarine, bakery shortenings, and other mediums of cooking** such as vegetable fat spreads and mixed fat spreads.
- Industry players were made to take a pledge back in 2018 that they would comply with **WHO's call for action to reduce TFA by 3% by 2021** allowing them three years to comply with the latest regulation.
- In 2011, India first passed a regulation that set a **TFA limit of 10% in oils and fats**, which was further reduced to 5% in 2015.

THE DIETARY FATS	
@cheatdaydesign	
POLYUNSATURATED FAT An essential fat (we must get from food because our bodies cannot produce) & lowers LDL (bad cholesterol)	MONOUNSATURATED FAT Considered a healthy fat: Lowers LDL (bad cholesterol) & maintains HDL (good cholesterol)
Found in: Most cooking oils, pumpkin seeds, pine nuts, sesame seeds, fatty fish	Found in: Olive oil, avocado & avocado oil, most nuts & nut butters
Also known as: Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids	
SATURATED FAT Increases total cholesterol & LDL (bad cholesterol). Best to consume in moderation.	TRANS FAT A by-product of processing healthier fats to give them a longer shelf life. Raises your LDL (bad cholesterol) and lowers your HDL (good cholesterol). Try to limit.
Found in: Red meat, whole milk, cheese, coconut, butter, processed meat, many baked goods, deep fried foods	Also known as: Partially hydrogenated oil <i>* Previously found in margarine & many processed foods, but has been banned by the FDA in the U.S. as of 2018</i>
	

Trans fats

- Trans fats are associated with increased risk of heart attacks and death from coronary heart disease.
- The WHO has also called for global elimination of trans fats by 2023.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- It is an **autonomous body** established under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.**
- The FSSAI has been established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006**, which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India.
- FSSAI is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety.
- Following are the **statutory powers** that the FSS Act, 2006 gives to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
 - **Framing of regulations** to lay down food safety standards
 - Laying down guidelines for accreditation of laboratories for food testing
 - Providing scientific advice and technical support to the Central Government
 - Contributing to the development of international technical standards in food
 - Collecting and collating data regarding food consumption, contamination, emerging risks, etc.
 - Disseminating information and promoting awareness about food safety and nutrition in India

Lumpy Skin Disease

What it is?

- Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) is a viral illness that causes prolonged morbidity in cattle and buffaloes.
- It appears as nodules of two to five centimeter diameter all over the body, particularly around the head, neck, limbs, udder and genitals.
- The lumps gradually open up like large and deep wounds.
- In some cases — under 10 per cent according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) — the infected animal succumbs to the disease.
- While the LSD virus easily spreads by blood-sucking insects like mosquitoes, flies and ticks and through saliva and contaminated water and food.
- Veterinarians say no treatment is available for the disease that is being reported for the first time in India.

Impact on India:

- In India, which has the **world's highest** 303 million heads of **cattle**, the disease has spread to **15 states within just 16 months**.
- Since LSD virus is related to sheep and goat pox, it can **transmit to sheep and goats** as well.

Bird Flu Outbreaks

Context

Bird flu has been reported among wild geese in Himachal Pradesh, crows in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and ducks in Kerala.

What is avian influenza or bird flu?

- It is a highly **contagious viral disease** caused by Influenza Type A viruses, which generally affects poultry birds such as chickens and turkeys.

How does the bird flu spread?

- Wild aquatic birds such as **ducks and geese are the natural reservoir of Influenza A viruses** and the central players in the ecology of these viruses.
- Many birds carry the flu without developing sickness, and shed it in their droppings.
- Since birds excrete even while flying, they provide “a nice aerosol of influenza virus, shedding it all over the world”.
- Sometimes, the virus jumps over to **mammals such as pigs, horses, cats and dogs**.
- It was the **H5N1 strain of the virus**, H5N2 and H5N8 that jumped from animals to humans, thus becoming a global public health concern.



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Does it spread easily to humans?

- No, it does not. Generally, people coming in close contact with infected alive or dead birds have contracted the H5N1 bird flu, and it does not usually spread from person to person, as per the WHO.
- There is also no evidence, the WHO says, that the disease can be spread to people through properly prepared and cooked poultry food.
- The virus is **sensitive to heat, and dies in cooking temperatures.**

What are its symptoms and treatment?

- Unlike in birds, where it generally infects the gut, the **avian influenza attacks the respiratory tract of humans and may cause severe respiratory illnesses such** as pneumonia or Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS).
- Its early symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, and sometimes-abdominal pain and diarrhoea.
- **Antiviral drugs**, especially **oseltamivir**, improve the prospects of survival in humans.
- The ministry advises people working with poultry to use PPEs and follow hand hygiene.
- Among poultry birds, vaccination strategies advised by the World Organisation for Animal Health can be used to prevent the flu, and the Organisation recommends eradicating the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) at its source to decrease the disease in avian species and further human infections.

Integrated Disease Surveillance Project (IDSP)

- Launched in 2004.
- **Objective:** To strengthen/maintain **decentralized laboratory based IT enabled disease surveillance system for epidemic prone diseases.**
- **Methodology:** Under IDSP, data is collected on epidemic prone diseases on weekly basis and information is collected on three formats, namely
 - "S" (suspected cases)
 - "P" (presumptive cases) and
 - "L" (laboratory confirmed cases) filled by Health Workers, Clinicians and Laboratory staff respectively.
- **Significance:** It gives information on the **disease trends and seasonality of diseases.**

Social Bubbles

Context

- Strategy followed in New Zealand **to contain the Corona virus.**
- It meant formation of social groups based on household bubbles, which are allowed to meet with each other during the pandemic.

About Social Bubbles

- **Micro-communities** that could contain spread of COVID-19.
- A bubble is referred to as an individual's household or the people that one lives with.
- People are allowed to extend their bubbles slightly to include caregivers or children who might be in shared care.
- These people **do not need to live in the same household**, but must be local.
- The bubble need to **be exclusive and small.**
- The country followed this approach during the lockdown and allowed the expansion of the bubbles as transmission slowed and restrictions eased.

Silent Epidemic (SE)

What are SE?

- Even before the pandemic struck, **malnutrition was a silent epidemic in India**, particularly among children.
- Many other ailments such as Tuberculosis, 'Respiratory Tract Infection' (RTI), 'Urinary Tract Infection', 'Acute Febrile Illness (AFI)', 'Acute Undifferentiated Fever', 'Fever of Unknown Origin' (FUO) are called silent epidemics.

Annual TB Report 2020

Report Findings

- Around 24.04 lakh TB patients have been notified in 2019, which amounts to a 14% increase in TB notification as compared to the year 2018.
- Achieving near-**complete on-line notification of TB patients through the NIKSHAY system**.
- Reduction in the number of missing cases to 2.9 lakh cases as against more than 10 lakhs in 2017.
- Private sector notifications increased by 35% with 6.78 lakh TB patients notified.
- Due to easy availability of molecular diagnostics, the proportion of children diagnosed with TB increased to 8% in 2019 compared to 6% in 2018.
- NIKSHAY also expanded the provision of four Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) schemes of the programme –
 - **NikshayPoshanYojana (NPY)** to TB patients
 - The incentive to Treatment Supporters
 - Incentive to Private Providers and
- Transport incentive to TB patients in the notified tribal areas.

Notified Disease:

- Needs to be reported to **Government authorities by law**.
- Allows authorities to monitor the disease and provide early warning system.
- The Centre has notified several diseases such as cholera, diphtheria, encephalitis, leprosy, meningitis, pertussis (whooping cough), plague, **tuberculosis**, AIDS, hepatitis, measles, yellow fever, malaria dengue, etc.
- The **onus of notifying the disease lies with State government**.

Nikshay System:

- An **information management system** provides one-stop solution for managing patients' information, monitoring program activity and performance all over the country.
- Developed and maintained by the Central TB Division (CTD), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India
- NIKSHAY (www.nikshay.gov.in) is a **web-enabled application**, which facilitates monitoring of universal access to TB patients data.
- NIKSHAY has **two broad objectives**:
 - One is to **create database of all TB patients** including Multi-Drug Resistant cases across the country
 - Use this database for **monitoring and research** purposes at all levels.
- NIKSHAY has been implemented at national, state, district and Tuberculosis Unit levels.

National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP)

- The National Tuberculosis Elimination **Program (NTEP)** is the **Public Health initiative** of the Government of India that organizes its anti-Tuberculosis efforts.
- It functions as a **flagship component of the National Health Mission (NHM)** and provides technical and managerial leadership to anti-tuberculosis activities in the country.
- The program provides, **free of cost quality tuberculosis diagnosis** and treatment services across the country through the government health system.
- The program is **managed through a four level hierarchy from the national level** down to the sub-district (Tuberculosis Unit) level.

Drug Approval Process in India

Drug approval is done through clinical approval trials in India.

- Clinical trials are governed by following acts:
 - **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940,**
 - **Medical Council of India Act, 1956 and**
 - **Central Council for Indian Medicine Act, 1970.**
- Required Permission to conduct a clinical trial:
 - Permission from the Drugs Controller General, DGCI

- Approval from the **Ethics Committee**
- Registration on the ICMR website

Phases of Clinical Trials

- **Phase I** or clinical pharmacology trials or “first in man” study: Administration of the drug to small number of informed volunteer.
 - Seeks to study toleration of the drug by the healthy individual and behaviour in the individual.
- **Phase II** or exploratory trials:
 - Increased no of individuals.
 - More geographical spread to 3-4 centres.
- **Phase III** or confirmatory trials:
 - Obtain sufficient evidence about the efficacy and safety of the drug
 - Higher number of Volunteer individuals likes 3000-4000 individuals.
 - If favourable data: Present to the licensing authorities to get the commercial license.
- **Phase IV** trials or post-marketing phase:
 - Phase of Surveillance
 - Monitoring of effects on all types of patients.



Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO):

- Works under Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
- National Regulatory Authority (NRA) of India.
- Implements Drugs and Cosmetics act 1940 and Rules 1945:

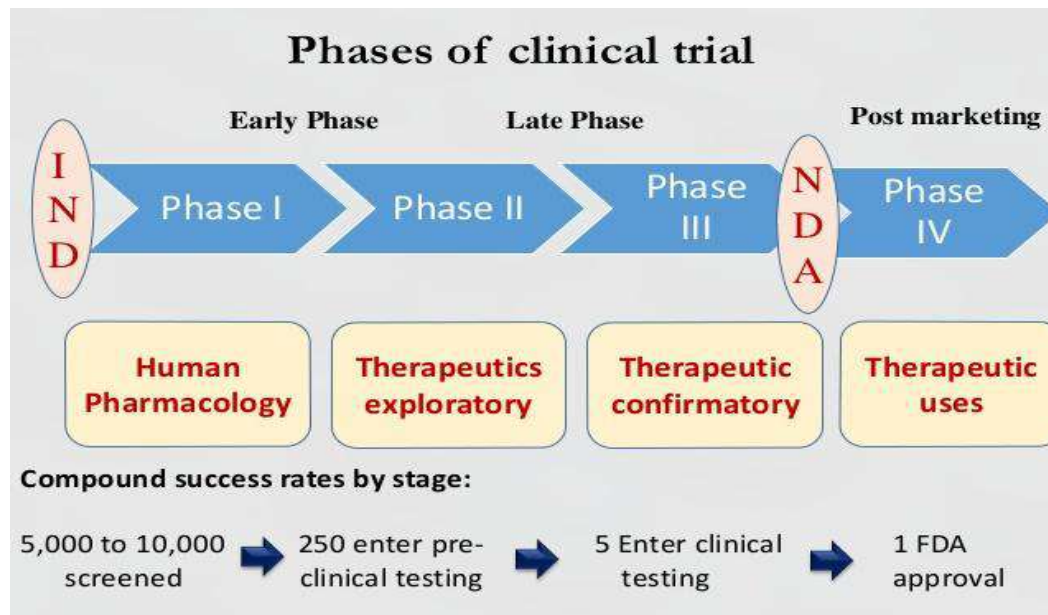
Functions:

- **Uniform implementation of the provisions** of the Act & Rules.
- **Ensure the safety, rights and well-being of the patients** by regulating the drugs and cosmetics.
- Responsible for **approval of Drugs, Conduct of Clinical Trials**.
- Lays down the **standards for Drugs** and has control over the **quality of imported Drugs in the country**.
- **Responsible for grant of licenses of certain specialized categories of critical Drugs** such as blood and blood products, I. V. Fluids, Vaccine etc.

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African Swine Fever (ASF)

Context

- In April 2020, India reported the first African swine fever disease outbreak in the state of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

About ASF

- It is a **hemorrhagic fever with high mortality rates in domestic pigs**.
- It **does not** cause **disease in humans**.
- Natural hosts or vectors** with no disease signs are warthogs, bush pigs and soft ticks.
- It is the only **virus with a double-stranded DNA genome** known to be transmitted by arthropods.
- It can be **transmitted by direct or indirect contact** with infected pigs, faeces or body fluids.
- No vaccine is available**.

Classical Swine Fever (CSF) or Hog Cholera

Context

- The Indian Institute of Veterinary Research (IVRI) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed a new vaccine to control classical swine fever. Production of vaccine has remained limited because of production of only 50 doses can be prepared from the spleen of a rabbit.

About CSF

- It is a **contagious viral disease of domestic or wild swine**, but does not affect other species.
- It causes viral diarrhoea in pigs and ailments in sheep.
- The disease **does not harm humans**.

WHO Strategy to eliminate Cervical Cancer

- World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer, outlines three key steps: **vaccination, screening and treatment**.
- Successful implementation of all three could **reduce more than 40% of new cases of the disease and 5 million related deaths by 2050**.
- Meeting the following targets by 2030 will place all countries on the path toward elimination:
 - 90% of girls fully vaccinated with the HPV vaccine by 15 years of age
 - 70% of women screened using a high-performance test by age 35 and again by 45

- 90% of women identified with cervical disease receive treatment (90% of women with pre-cancer treated and 90% of women with invasive cancer managed).
- **Cervical cancer**, the fourth most common cancer among women globally, is a **preventable** disease but strikes at least 5,70,000 each year and kills 3,11,000.
- Almost all cases are linked to infection with **human papillomavirus (HPV) types transmitted by sexual contact**.
- Infection rates are twice as high in developing countries and death rates three times higher than in high-income countries.

INDEX, REPORTS AND SCHEMES

SDG Index 2019

Outcomes of SDG Index 2019

- **Kerala is ranked first** in terms of the progress made towards SDG.
- **Bihar is at the bottom** of the NITI Aayog's SDG Index.
- Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim have shown the most improvement

About SDG Index:

- The **NITI Aayog** is the coordinating agency for SDG in India.
- Through this index, it monitors the progress made by the states in terms of the SDG indicators.
- It took into account 16 out of 17 goals specified by the United Nations as SDGs.
- The Index this year ranked states based on 54 targets spread over 100 indicators out of 306 outlined by the UN.
- **NITI Aayog** has given India an overall score of 60 points, recognizing the major improvements in:
 - Affordable and clean energy
 - Clean Energy and Sanitation
 - Peace, justice and strong institutions
- The Swachh Bharat Mission has contributed largely to the high scores on the **sixth SDG – cleans water and sanitation**.
- Government schemes to provide electricity and cooking gas connections to rural India contributed to progress in the **seventh SDG – affordable and clean energy**.

About Sustainable Development Goals:

- It is a group of **17 goals with 169 targets and 306 indicators**, as proposed by the United Nations General Assembly's Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved by **2030**.
- The UN has developed 232 indicators to measure compliance by member nations.

World Population Report 2020

Findings of the Report

- **One in three girls missing globally** due to sex selection, both pre- and post-natal, is from India – 46 million out of the total 142 million.
- Number of missing women has more than **doubled over the past 50 years**.
- **India has the highest rate of excess female deaths** at 13.5 per 1,000 female births or one in 9 deaths of females below the age of 5 due to postnatal sex selection.
- **Reasons:** Advent of technology and **increased access to ultrasound imaging encouraged female foeticide**.
- Human trafficking for marriages and child marriages will increase if this scenario continued.

State of World Population 2020 report:

- It is published **annually** by **United Nation Population fund**.
- UNFPA is the **United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency**.
- UNFPA calls for the **realization of reproductive rights for all and supports access to a wide range of sexual and reproductive health services** – including voluntary family planning, maternal health care and comprehensive sexuality education

Rental Housing Scheme for Urban Migrants

About

- It is a **sub-scheme of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban**.
- About 1.03 lakh completed government-funded houses across cities that were yet to be allotted to beneficiaries under existing schemes would be converted into the rental housing complexes.

Working of the Scheme

- The vacant housing complexes would be **converted through 25-year concession agreements**.
- The concessionaire would repair or retrofit the homes, maintain the rooms and address any pending infrastructure needs like water, sewerage, roads, etc.
- The States and Union Territories would invite bids to select concessionaires.
- The complexes would **go back to the local body after 25 years**.

Special Incentives

- Special incentives like use permission, 50% additional FAR/FSI [floor area ratio and floor space index], concessional loan at priority sector lending rate, tax reliefs at par with affordable housing etc. will be offered to private/public entities to develop ARHCs on their own available vacant land for 25 years.

Target Beneficiaries

- Target beneficiaries of the scheme would be **workers who come from rural areas or towns to work in manufacturing, hospitality, health, construction, etc.**

Decline in Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)

Facts sheet

- The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in India has declined to 113 in 2016-18 from 122 in 2015-17 and 130 in 2014-2016.
- The **target 3.1 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** set by the United Nations aims to **reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 1, 00,000 live births**.
- The southern States registered a lower MMR – Andhra Pradesh (65), Telangana (63), Karnataka (92), Kerala (43) and Tamil Nadu (60).

Missing girls

An estimated one in nine deaths of girls below the age of 5 in India, the highest among all countries, may be attributed to postnatal sex selection. The table shows estimates of excess female mortality (EFM) below age 5 and its share of overall mortality rates in 2012

Excess female mortality rates are calculated as the difference between observed and expected mortality rates for girls below age 5

Country	EFM below 5 years	EFM as a % of overall female under-5 mortality
India	13.5	11.7%
Bahrain	1.1	5.9%
Egypt	2.4	5.6%
Iran	1.8	5.2%
Jordan	1.9	5.1%
Nepal	2.9	3.5%
China	1	3.3%
Afghanistan	5.2	2.7%
Pakistan	4.7	2.7%
Bangladesh	2.1	2.6%

Maternal Mortality rate

- The death of a woman **while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy**, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy.

State of Food Security and Nutrition in the world (SOFI) 2020

Key findings

- **Increase in the number of hungry people** to between 8. To 13 crores people due to ongoing recession.
- Off track to achieve eradication of malnutrition by 2030.
- Prevalence of Hunger: **Asia (38 crores) > Africa (25 crores) > Latin America and Caribbean (4.8 crores)**
- A healthy diet costs more than Rs. 143 (or \$1.90/ day), which is the international poverty threshold

SOFI report

- Published jointly by the **Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)**, the **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**, the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**, the **UN World Food Programme (WFP)** and the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**.
- First Editions in 2017.

World Drug Report

Key findings

- The **fourth highest seizure of opium** in 2018 was reported from **India**, after **Iran**, **Afghanistan** and **Pakistan**.
 - Opium is a highly addictive narcotic drug acquired in the dried latex form the opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*) seed pod.
- In terms of **heroin seizure** (1.3 tonnes), **India was at the 12th position** in the world.
 - Heroin (diacetylmorphine) is derived from the morphine alkaloid found in opium and is roughly 2 to 3 times more potent.
- Global area under opium poppy cultivation declined for the second year in a row in 2019.
- Trafficking in heroin continues to be more widespread in geographical terms than trafficking in opium or morphine.



ABOUT WORLD DRUG REPORT:

- The World Drug Report is published **annually** by the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**.
- The first report was published in 1997.
- UNODC assist the UN in better addressing a coordinated, comprehensive response to the interrelated issues of **illicit trafficking in and abuse of drugs, crime prevention and criminal justice, international terrorism, and political corruption.**

Press Freedom Index

Context

- India dropped two places on the global press freedom index ranking to 142nd place lower than its neighbors – Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka that are ranked higher in the list.

More information

- It is published and released every year by **Reporters Without Borders**.
- It ranks 180 countries and regions according to the **level of freedom available to journalists**.
- The media freedom situation is evaluated based on
 - Pluralism
 - independence of the media

- quality of legislative framework and
- safety of journalists in each country and region.
- Public policies are **not used as an indicator** of the quality of journalism.

Pradhan Mantri Research Fellowship Scheme

Context

- Recently, Ministry of Education has made some changes in the scheme.

What are the changes?

- Now for the students from **any recognised institute/university** (other than IISc/IITs/NITs/IISERs/IIEST/CFIITs), the requirement of GATE Score is reduced to 650 from 750 apart from minimum CGPA of 8 or equivalent.

About PMRF scheme

- It is a **public-private partnership (PPP)** between **Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB)**, which is an autonomous body under the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**, Government of India, and **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**.
- Under the scheme, around **1000 students** who have completed B.Tech or integrated M.Tech or M.Sc in Science and Technology streams or are in the final year, will be offered **direct admission into the PhD programme**, post the selection process, in the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)/ Indian Institute of Science (IISc) with a fixed amount of **fellowship for five years**.
- In order to enable the aspirants to participate in international research conferences and present research papers, a **research grant of Rs.2 lakhs will be provided to each of them for a period of 5 years**.

NSO Reports

1. Digital divide and literacy

Findings on digital divide

- Across India, **only one in 10 households have a computer** — whether a desktop, laptop or tablet.
- In rural India, **however, only 15% are connected** to the Internet.
- The national capital has the highest Internet access, with 55% of homes having such facilities.
- **Himachal Pradesh and Kerala are the only other states where more than half** of all households have Internet.
- **Odisha has the least Internet-enabled** homes.
- There are **ten other States with less than 20% Internet penetration**, including States with software hubs such as Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

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- **Kerala shows the least inequality: more than 39% of the poorest rural homes have Internet**, in comparison to 67% of the richest urban homes.
- **Assam shows the starkest inequality, with almost 80% of the richest urban homes having Internet access denied to 94% of those in the poorest rural homes in the State.**

Comment on Literacy

- The Survey shows that **20% of Indians above the age of 5 years had basic digital literacy, doubling to just 40% in the critical age group of 15 to 29 years.**
- **More than one in five Indians above 7 years still cannot read and write in any language.**
- Andhra Pradesh has the country's lowest literacy rate, at just 66.4%, significantly lower than less developed States such as Chhattisgarh (77.3%), Jharkhand (74.3%), Uttar Pradesh (73%), and Bihar (70.9%).
- **Kerala remains at the top of the pile with 96.2% literacy, followed by three northern States: Delhi (88.7%), Uttarakhand (87.6%) and Himachal Pradesh (86.6%).**

2. Health in India report

- **Published by:** The National Statistical Organisation (NSO).
- **Data derived from:** The report is based on the 75th round of the National Sample Survey (July 2017-June 2018) on **household social consumption** related to health.

Findings of the Report

- Across the country, **only 59.2% of children under five years are fully immunised.**
 - Full immunization means that a child receives a cocktail of eight vaccine doses in the first year of life: BCG, the measles vaccine; the oral polio vaccine (OPV), the DPT/pentavalent vaccine.
- Although almost all children in India are vaccinated against tuberculosis and receive their birth dose of polio vaccine.
- **Two out of five children do not complete their immunisation program**
- Among States, Manipur (75%), Andhra Pradesh (73.6%) and Mizoram (73.4%) recorded the highest rates of full immunisation.
- At the other end of the spectrum lies Nagaland, where only 12% of children received all vaccinations, followed by Puducherry (34%) and Tripura (39.6%).

About Mission Indradhanush:

- The **Mission Indradhanush aims to cover all those children by 2020 who are either unvaccinated or are partially vaccinated against vaccine-preventable diseases.**
- India's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) provides free vaccines against 12 life-threatening diseases, to 26 million children annually.
- Focused and systematic immunization drive will be through a "catch-up" campaign mode where the aim is to cover all the children who have been left out or missed out for immunization.
- **Government has further launched the Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0**

About National Statistical Organisation (NSO)

ABOUT	National Statistical Office (NSO) was formed through the merger of the NSSO and CSO under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as the nodal agency for planned development of the statistical system in the country • Lays down and maintains norms and standards in the field of statistics • Coordinates the statistical work in respect of the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India and State Statistical Bureaus (SSBs) • Compiles and releases the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) every month in the form of 'quick estimates'; • Conducts the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) • Organizes and conducts periodic all-India Economic Censuses and follow-up enterprise surveys • Conducts large-scale all-India sample surveys for creating the database

needed for studying the impact of specific problems for the benefit of different population groups in diverse socio-economic areas, such as employment, consumer expenditure, housing conditions and environment, literacy levels, health, nutrition, family welfare, etc.

Remote Learning Reachability Report:

- Published by: It is issued by UNICEF.

Finding of the report:

- Just 24% of Indian households have internet connections to access e-education.
- There is a large rural-urban and gender divide that is likely to widen the learning gap across high, middle and low-income families
- Expressed concerns over children from economically disadvantaged families struggling with access to remote learning.
- Students, especially girls, from most marginalised communities do not have easy access to smartphones, and even if they do, internet connectivity is poor.
- Lack of Quality content in Vernacular languages.
- In India, over 1.5 million (15 lakh) schools have been closed due to the pandemic affecting 286 million (28.6 crores) children from pre-primary to secondary levels, (of which 49% girls).
- Even when children have the technology and tools at home, they may not be able to learn remotely through those platforms due to competing factors in the home, including pressure to do chores, being forced to work, a poor environment for learning and lack of support in using the online or broadcast curriculum.

About United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established on 11th December 1946 by United Nations general assembly. To provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War 2 In 1959 declaration of the rights of the children. In 1961 mainly focused on education to children
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the basic nutrition, health and education needs of children are met. To give children the opportunity to expand their potential. To create an international ethical standard of behaviour towards children.
UNICEF- India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organisation began its work in India in 1949. 1975 - Launched Integrated Child Development Services for development of 0-6 years of child. 1985 -Launched National Mission on Immunization for better health outcomes. 2012 - Undertook Polio Campaign for complete eradication.
Organisation Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headquarters in NEW YORK.
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day. Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. Achieve universal primary education Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling

Swachh Survekshan Rankings 2020

Context

- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs gave away the awards for SwachhSurvekshan 2020, the fifth edition of the annual cleanliness urban survey conducted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

Results of Swachh Survekshan 2020

- 1st : Indore
- Cleanest State in >100 ULB Category: Chhattisgarh

- Cleanest State in <100 ULB Category State: Jharkhand

Survey Methodology

- Carried Out by Quality Council of India
- Criteria and Weightage:
 - Municipal documentation (solid waste management including door-to-door collection, processing, and disposal, and open defecation free status. These carried 45 per cent of the total 2,000 marks.
 - Citizen feedback – 30 per cent (450 + 150 marks)
 - Independent observation – 25 per cent (500 marks)

About Swachh Bharat Mission- Urban (SBM-U)

- Objective of making urban India 100% open defecation free (ODF) along with 100% scientific solid waste management.
- ODF+ and ODF++: launched in August 2018. **ODF+** focuses on toilets with water, maintenance and hygiene, **ODF++** focuses on toilets with sludge and septage management.
- Eligibility:** Cities that had been certified ODF at least once, on the basis of the ODF protocols, are eligible to declare themselves as SBM-ODF+ & SBM-ODF++.

About Star Rating

- Launched in Jan 2018
- Objective:** Institutionalize a mechanism for cities to achieve garbage free status leading to higher degrees of cleanliness.
- Included Components:**
 - Cleanliness of drains & water bodies,
 - Plastic waste management,
 - Managing construction & demolition waste
- Method of Giving Star Rating:**
 - Self-assessment and Self-verification
 - Involvement of citizen groups for a transparent system of self-declaration.
 - Self-declaration through an independent third party survey

About Swachh Survekshan League

- A quarterly cleanliness assessment of cities and towns done in three quarters, with 25% weightage integrated into the final Swachh Survekshan results
- Focus on parameters pertaining to wastewater treatment and reuse along with faecal sludge.
- Focus on crucial issues of legacy of waste management and remediation of landfills.
- In addition to the present criteria of evaluating cities on 'population category', this new category will categorize cities on the basis of six select indicator wise performance criteria.

SWACHH SURVEKSHAN 2020		
INDIA'S CLEANEST CITY		
<div> <div>Indore</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div>Surat</div> <div>2</div> </div> <div> <div>Navi Mumbai</div> <div>3</div> </div>		
(National >1 lakh population)		
TOP PERFORMERS		
Best City in Maximum Citizen's Participation (Citizen Feedback and Social Media)	Cleanest Mega City (>40L)	Best Mega City in 'Citizen's Feedback' (>40L)
Shahjahanpur	Ahmedabad	Greater Hyderabad
Best Mega City in Innovation and Best Practices (>40L)	Best 'Self-Sustainable Mega City' (based on GFC/ODF/Cost Vs Revenue) (>40L)	Cleanest Big City (10-40L)
Greater Chennai	Bengaluru	Vijayawada
Fastest Mover Big City (10-40L)	Best Big City in 'Citizen's Feedback' (10-40L)	Best Big City in Innovation and Best Practices (10-40L)
Jodhpur	Jabalpur	Ludhiana
Best 'Self-Sustainable Big City' (based on GFC/ODF/Cost Vs Revenue) (10-40L)	Cleanest Medium City (>3-10 L)	Fastest Mover Medium City (>3-10 L)
Rajkot	Mysore	Firozabad

About Quality Council of India:

- Set up in 1997 by Government of India jointly with Indian Industry
- Autonomous body under the administrative control of the Department For Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
- Operate the National Accreditation Structure for conformity assessment bodies
- Provide accreditation in the field of education, health and quality promotion
- Promotes the adoption of quality standards relating to Quality Management Systems (ISO 14001 Series), Food Safety Management Systems (ISO 22000 Series)
- Indian industry is represented in QCI by three premier industry associations namely ASSOCHAM; CII; and FICCI.
- The Governing Council of QCI is headed by Chairperson, QCI.

Van Dhan Yojana

Context

- Setting up of 1,205 tribal enterprises employing 3.6 lakh people through 18,000 Self Help Groups (SHG).
- Sales of 3.5 crores worth of produce.

Launched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched by TRIFED India in 2018
Implementing agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Level : Ministry of Tribal affairs • Central level: TRIFED India • State Level: Nodal agencies for Minor Forest Produce Scheme • Unit Level: SHG
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development of tribals involved in the collection of Minor Food Produces • Optimum utilization of natural resources • Providing sustainable livelihood
Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution of Van DhanVikas Kendra • Provide Skill Upgradation and Capacity building training • Setting up of Primary Processing and Value addition facilities • Formation of SHG comprising of tribals • Linking of SHG with Van DhanVikas Kendra • Provide Working Capital to Van DhanVikas Kendra
Other Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aloe vera soaps and gooseberry wine in the north east • mohaladdu and, amlamurabba [preserved gooseberries] in Maharashtra and Rajasthan • tamarind blocks, dried tendu leaves, processed mahua, lac bangles and eco-friendly leaf plates from Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh.

Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP) Scheme

- Provides MSP for MFP collected by tribals.
- Launched in 2013.
- MFP comprises all non-timber forest produce of plant origin such as bamboo, brush wood, stumps, cane, tussar, cocoons, honey, wax, lac, tendu or kendu leaves, medicinal plants and herbs, roots, tubers, etc, according to the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

About MSP

- Form of market intervention by the Government of India.
- MSP is price fixed by Government of India to protect the producer - tribals - against excessive fall in price during bumper production years.
- Guarantee price for their produce from the Government.

- The major objectives are to **support the tribals from** distress sales.
- In this scheme, states can fix msp below or above 10% of the price fixed by government of India.
- Total a list of 73 items are included in the list.
- **Few items are** Tamarind (with seeds), Wild Honey, Gum Karaya, Karanj seeds, Salseed, Mahua seed, Sal leaves, Hill Broom Grass, Nagarmotha.

Self-Help Groups

- Informal associations of people who come together to improve their living conditions.
- Institutionalised through SHG Bank linkage project by NABARD in 1992.
- National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) aims to promote self-employment in rural areas through formation of Self Help groups.

Global Hunger Index, 2020

Context

- It was recently published by **Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe**

Details of the report

- India **ranked 94 among 107 nations** in the Global Hunger Index 2020 and is in the '**serious**' hunger category with experts blaming **poor implementation processes, lack of effective monitoring, siloed approach in tackling malnutrition and poor performance** by large states behind the low ranking.
- Last year, India's rank was **102 out of 117 countries**.
- The neighboring Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan too are in the 'serious' category but **ranked higher than India** in this year's hunger index.
- According to the report, **14 percent of India's population is undernourished**.
- It also showed the country recorded a **37.4 percent stunting rate** among children under **five** and a **wasting rate of 17.3 per cent**. The **under-five mortality rate stood at 3.7 per cent**.

Global Hunger Index (GHI):

- The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool for comprehensively measuring and tracking hunger at global, regional, and national levels.
- GHI scores are based on the values of four component indicators:
 - **Undernourishment:** Share of the population with insufficient caloric intake,
 - **Child wasting:** Share of children under age five who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute under nutrition,
 - **Child stunting:** Share of children under age five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic under nutrition, and
 - **Child mortality:** Mortality rate of children under age five, partly reflecting the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments.
- Based on the values of the four indicators, the GHI determines hunger on a **100-point scale where 0 is the best possible score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst**.
- Each country's GHI score is classified by severity, from low to extremely alarming.

Global Education Monitoring Report

- Released by **UNESCO**
- **Mandates:**
 - Progress on **education in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, with particular reference to the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on education and its ten targets monitoring framework.
 - It also **addresses inclusion in education**, drawing attention to all those excluded from education, because of background or ability.

Special Marriage Act, 1954

Context

- In a significant judgment affecting inter-faith couples seeking to get married under the Special Marriage Act, 1954, the Allahabad High Court has ruled that it would be optional and not mandatory for them to publish a notice about their intended marriage.
- Court said such a notice was an invasion of their privacy, drawing unnecessary social pressure and interference in their life.

Key provisions of SMA

- All marriages done under the SMA require publication of the names of the couple for inviting objections from the public for 30 days.
- Marriages solemnized under Special Marriage Act are **not governed by personal laws**.
- It is applicable to the **entire territory of India and extends to intending spouses who are both Indian nationals living abroad**
- Marriage performed under this Act is a civil contract and there need be no rites or ceremonial requirements
- Each party involved should have **no other subsisting valid marriage i.e. marriage should be monogamous for both parties**
- The groom must be at least 21 years old; the bride must be at least 18 years old
- The parties **should not fall within the degree of prohibited relationship**
- Succession to the property of person married under this Act are governed by Indian Succession Act.
- It is appropriate to all residents of India regardless of their religion applicable at Court marriage.

MISCELLANEOUS

World Food Programme

- Born in 1961
- Food-assistance branch of the United Nations
- World's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.
- **Member of the United Nations Development Group** and part of its executive committee.
- WFP is **100% voluntarily funded**.
- **Objectives:**
 - **Save lives and protect** livelihoods in emergencies;
 - **Support food security and nutrition and build livelihoods** in fragile settings and following emergencies
 - **Reduce risk and enable people**, communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs
 - **Reduce under nutrition and break the intergenerational cycle** of hunger with education for the young ones.

Tech for Tribal

Context

- Tech For Tribal initiative was e-launched by TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs in association with Chhattisgarh MFP Federation and IIT Kanpur.

About the Program:

- It is a programme by **TRIFED**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) under the **Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP) programme**.
- It aims at the **holistic development of tribal**.
- It focuses on entrepreneurship development, soft skills, IT, and business development through SHGs operating through **Van DhanVikasKendras (VDVKs)**.

- The programme aims to **tap the traditional knowledge and skills of tribal** and add branding, packaging and **marketing skills** to optimize their income through a market led enterprise model by setting up of Van DhanKendra's (VDVKs).
- Tech for Tribal initiative" is a unique program to make tribal of India "Aatmanirbhar", focusing to bridge the gap between tribal entrepreneurs and urban markets.

Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy (PCIM&H)

- It is an **autonomous body** established under the aegis of the Ministry of AYUSH.
- It promote and preserve the well-being of humans and animals in India, by bringing out official standards for quality of drugs included in Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani& Homoeopathy systems of Medicine.

Global Vaccine Summit 2020

- UK-hosted **Global Vaccine Summit 2020**.
- Initiated by the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**.
- Partners with the Foundation, the WHO, the UNICEF, the World Bank and governments all over the world.

GAVI

- **Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation** was formed in 2000 as the 'Works in the area of improving access to vaccines for the most vulnerable children.
- It shares the cost developing countries pay for vaccines.

"Kiran" – Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline

- The **Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry** have launched "KIRAN" – the mental health rehabilitation helpline.
- It is a **24/7 toll-free helpline** to provide support to people facing anxiety, stress, depression, suicidal thoughts and other mental health concerns.
- The **helpline will be available in 13 languages**.
- It would function as the first step for callers to get advice, counselling and referral to psychologists and psychiatrists.

