

Social ISSUES

MAINS
365

Classroom Study Material 2024

August 2023-May 2024



SOCIAL ISSUES

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“You are as strong as your Foundation”

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A Note for Students

Dear Students,

Understanding current affairs can add depth to your perception of intricate issues and help you form nuanced perspectives, especially in the context of the Mains examination.

In light of this, Mains 365 documents attempt to simplify your study process by including features that assist in creating answers, reviewing content, and retaining information.

Social Mains 365 Key Features



Concise and Objective

Brief, objective presentations of each topic, incorporating relevant examples and key facts.



Integration of current and static topics

'Topic at a Glance' section provides a static overview of the section enriched with latest data, examples and developments.



Enhanced Infographics

Designed for effective revision and engagement.



Previous Years Questions (PYQs)

Segregated list of previous years questions for efficient revision.



Appendix

Includes appendix of key data and facts which can be used to enrich your answer.



Weekly Focus

QR code-linked list of relevant weekly focus documents.

We sincerely hope Mains 365 documents will guide you effectively in your preparation and aid you in scoring better in your Mains examination.

"Learn everything you can, anytime you can, from anyone you can. There will always come a time when

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1. WOMEN

1.1. WOMEN IN WORKFORCE AT A GLANCE

Women in Workforce



Key Data and Facts

As per **Periodic Labour Force Survey (2022-23)**, Women participation has increased from 23.3% (2017) to **37% (2022-23)**.

Wage disparity: men in India capture 82% of labour income (World Inequality Report 2022)



Reason behind Low Participation of Women in Work Force

Family responsibilities and the need to conform to social norms.	Women participation in workforce discouraged with the rise of household income	Lack of opportunity as a higher percentage of males compared to females have received vocational/technical training	Gender based discrimination at workplace like low wages, sexual harassment, etc.	Digital divide (only 35% women use internet)
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Importance of Women in Work Force

Gender equality would increase India's annual GDP growth by 1.4% (McKinsey report)	Women's decision-making power in the household is more if they are employed (NFHS)	Improvement in social indicators like Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) etc.	A younger women workforce could help India reap the benefits of demographic dividend .	Parity with Other Countries and achieving Global Commitment such as SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), etc.
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Initiatives to promote women in workforce

Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017	Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH), 2020	Code on Wages (2019) prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex	Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH) to enhance safety of women at workplace.	G20 Alliance for Empowerment and Progression of Women's Economic Representation (G20 EMPOWER).
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1.1.1. GENDER PAY GAP

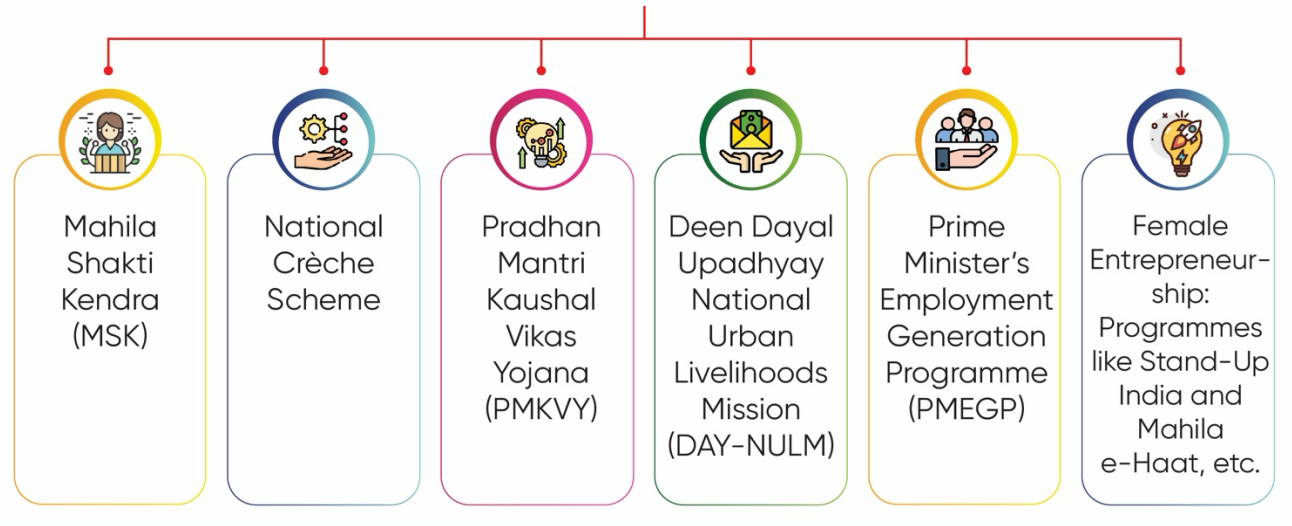
Why in the News?

The latest round of the Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS) introduced a crucial focus on weekly hours worked, revealing that the inequality in total earnings might not capture the full picture.

More on News

- **Earnings Gap:** Men earn more than women across all work types, with self-employed men earning 2.8 times more than women in 2023.
- **Labour Participation:** Rural women's LFPR increased, with more self-employed, but average work hours dropped from 37.1 to 30.1 weekly (2019-2023).
- **Financial Decisions:** 47% of women make financial decisions independently; autonomy depends on income, age, and affluence stage.
- **Pay Disparity:** Women earn 77 cents for every dollar men earn. Less than 20% of economies have mechanisms to enforce pay gap solutions (World Bank).

Initiatives by Government of India for reducing Gender pay gap



Way Forward

- **Promote pay transparency:** Communicate salary ranges for different positions and regularly disclose gender pay gap data to assess progress.
 - Establish and enforce **centralised wage-setting institutions**, such as collectively agreed wage floors or statutory minimum wages.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for leadership:** Will ensure effective and objective representation of women in leadership roles.
- **Reforms at the workplace:** Implement the POSH Act, support maternity breaks, offer remote work, and promote equality with better parental leave and childcare.
- **Addressing social norms:** Gender-equal socialization by family and schools will help in gender sensitization.
 - Also engage with **community leaders, religious institutions, and other influential figures.**
- **Adequate Research:** Collection and use of high-quality data, disaggregated by sex, age and other forms of social and economic differentiation, will help in policy making.

1.1.2. MENSTRUAL LEAVES

Why in the News?

There have been several discussions regarding providing a Paid Menstrual Leave policy in India.

What is menstrual leave?

It is a type of leave where women and trans-women may have the option of taking a paid leave from their workplace during the period of menstruation.

Need for a menstrual leave	Issues/Challenges related to menstrual leave
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns with fundamental rights: In line with Article 21 (Right to Life) and Article 14 (Right to Equality). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution empowers State to make special provisions for women Article 15(3). • Addresses the unique health needs of women: Menstruation is accompanied by symptoms such as cramps and fatigue, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Further, lack of proper sanitation facilities at the workplace can impact women’s hygiene and reproductive health. • Mitigates presenteeism: An option for a leave may improve overall productivity and well-being. • De-stigmatizes discussion around women’s health: Encourages discussion and support for women's reproductive health and rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential discrimination in workplace: Could lead to biases against women, affecting hiring and promotions. • Perpetuating Sexist Beliefs and Attitudes: May perpetuate gender stereotypes and notions of biological determinism, like assumptions that women are unfit for the workplace. • Resentment among employees: Accommodating menstrual leaves may disrupt workflow, increase workload for other team members, etc. • Financial strain: Additional leave benefits could increase costs, impacting small businesses. • Implementation in informal sector: Difficult to implement in informal sector, freelancers and gig economy. • Social stigma: Female employees may feel hesitant to seek benefits due to societal stigma.

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Status of menstrual leave policy in India

- **At the National level:** No central law or directive for paid menstrual leave in India.
 - **Right of Women to Menstrual Leave and Free Access to Menstrual Health Products Bill, 2022:** A private member bill proposing paid menstrual leave of three days in any establishment registered with the government.
- **At the state level:** Kerala (2023) grants menstrual leave for female university students.
- **Private Sector:** Firms like Zomato, Swiggy, offer paid menstrual leave, setting industry standards.

Global initiatives on menstrual leave policy

- **Japan (1947):** Introduced menstrual leave in the **labour law** allowing menstrual leave **on request.**
- **South Korea (2001):** Labor law provides for monthly “physiologic leave,” under which all female workers can get a day’s leave every month.
- **Other countries with provision for menstrual leave:** Indonesia, Zambia, Vietnam, Taiwan etc.

Way Forward

- **Menstrual Leave Policies:** Incentivize private firms to offer menstrual leave and highlight the benefits of increased female participation.
- **Flexible Alternatives:** Provide options like working from home and customized schedules for women.
- **Inclusive Environment:** Ensure access to hygienic facilities, private spaces for menstrual hygiene, and essential supplies.
- **Destigmatize Menstruation:** Promote education and awareness on menstrual health and hygiene.
- **Adopt draft national menstrual hygiene policy, 2023:** Policy aims to provide comprehensive support throughout the menstrual journey with special focus on **underserved and vulnerable populations.**



Draft National Menstrual Hygiene Policy, 2023

Need

- Only 78% of women aged 15-24 years use hygienic menstrual protection
- 23 million girls drop out annually due to lack of proper facilities. (2014 report by an NGO)

Policy strategy

- Ensuring **access to affordable and safe** menstrual hygiene products
- Promote **Quality Standards and Regulatory Framework**
- **Availability of Clean and Dignified Menstrual Hygiene Facilities** in homes, educational institutions, and public spaces.
- Promotion of **education and awareness of menstrual hygiene**
- **Collaboration with the Non-Government Sector/Engagement with the private sector** for research and development, bringing innovation, developing distribution channels, etc.
- **Integrate principles of menstrual hygiene into existing health, education, sanitation, gender, and environment programs.**
- **Foster research and innovation** in menstrual hygiene management.

1.1.3. WOMEN IN STEM

Why in the News?

A recent World Bank study highlighted a wide gap between women in STEM education and their workforce participation.

More on News

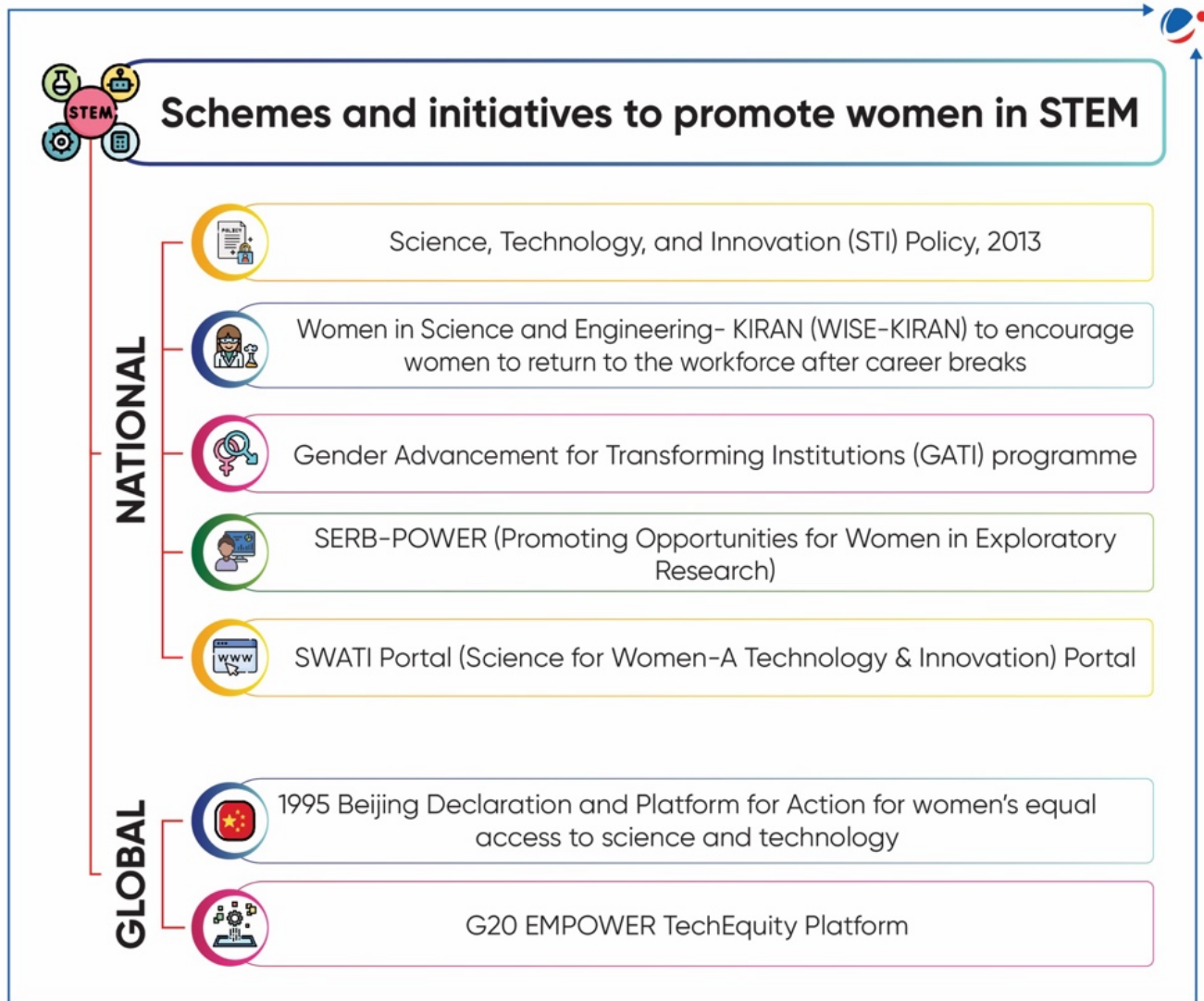
- **Global STEM Workforce:** Women make up 29.2% in STEM, despite being 49.3% in non-STEM jobs (Global Gender Gap Report 2023).
- **India's STEM Graduates:** India leads with 42.6% women STEM graduates but only 27% in STEM jobs (World Bank).
- **Reasons:** Women exit STEM due to marriage, childbirth, inadequate support, gender-blind institutions, which is referred as the '**Leaky Pipeline**'.

Need for women in STEM

- **To address the shortage of skilled workers** in these fields.
- To **ensure gender diversity** in a rapidly growing global digital economy.
- **To narrow the gender pay gap** and enhance women's economic security.
- Seeing women in prominent STEM roles can help **break down various gender stereotypes**, while also promoting young girls to pursue these careers.

Challenges

- **Dual role syndrome:** Professional decisions of women are largely affected by their domestic responsibilities.
- **Discrimination at workplace:** Women face Gender bias at workplace in performance evaluations due to lack of women representation in leadership positions.
- **Gender Stereotypes:** STEM fields are often viewed as masculine and it is believed that women are intellectually weaker in Mathematics and Science.
- **Lack of benefits:** Inadequate travel allowance, lodging, and maternity benefits deter women from STEM careers.
- **Fewer role models:** Girls lack inspiration in STEM fields.



Way Forward

- **Mentorship and support:** Institute stable mentorships and support networks in each organisation.
- **Equity and inclusion:** Mandate the creation of an **'Office for Equity and Inclusion'** in every institution.
- **Representation:** Ensure women scientists are on panels for career drives, recruitments, budget proposals, etc.
- **Childcare:** Set up a daycare centre on campus.
- **Workplace Culture:** Create a supportive, inclusive culture to attract and retain women in STEM.
- **Remote Opportunities:** Promote online learning, credentialing, and remote work to unlock opportunities for women in STEM.

1.1.4. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

Why in the News?

Recently Reserve Bank of India's Innovation Hub (RBIH) released a white paper titled **'At the Helm: Women Entrepreneurs Transforming Middle India.'**

More on News

- Despite notable progress in education and legislative measures improving workplace conditions, women's participation in **entrepreneurship remains limited, particularly in Tier II and Tier III cities.**



- **Women constitute 13.76% of entrepreneurs in India.**
- **Contribution to GDP by Women is 17% in India**, as against global average of 37%.

Significance of Women Entrepreneurs in Middle India

- **Sustainable economic development & Employment Generation:** India could create more than 30 million women-owned enterprises, potentially creating 150 to 170 million jobs (NITI Aayog).
- **Poverty Alleviation:** India could increase GDP growth by 1.5% by including 50% of women in workforce (World Bank).
- **Gender equality:** Women entrepreneurs help in bridging the gender gap in the business world, promoting gender equality.
- **Role Models and Agents of Social Change:** E.g., Maa Bimaleshwari Janhit Karya Samiti - A Self Help Group started by Phool Basan Yadav, empowering 200,000 poor women.
- **Women Empowerment:** E.g., Usha Jha - Affectionately known as 'Usha auntie' in Patna, supported women with entrepreneurial aspirations.

Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Middle India

- **Capital Gap:** Merely 3% of the women surveyed had accessed external funding.
- **Data Gap:** Lack of gender disaggregated data hampers ability to present compelling business cases to investors or lenders.
- **Visibility Gap:** Societal undervaluation of women's work.
- **Network Gap:** Women face challenge of rebuilding their social networks after migration due to marriage resulting in slower career progression.
- **Care Gap:** Women entrepreneurs are more likely to experience pauses in their careers due to caregiving responsibilities, including maternity leave and other family care needs.

Way Forward and policy recommended by white paper

- **Gender-disaggregated data:** To create interest in this segment and make effective policy interventions based on data.
- **Use of Local role models:** Can play an important role in developing an enabling environment.
- **Access to capital:** Grants to women entrepreneurs and female focused Venture Capital funds to break the vicious cycle of women owned businesses. **E.g., Women Exporters in the Digital Economy (WEIDE) Fund by WTO.**
- **Providing co-working and co-building space:** Many women are not able to expand their enterprises because they operate from home and often limit their operations for as long as possible.
- **More responsive financial system:** Going beyond PSL targets and setting KPIs for more inclusive investing and credit can be an effective policy approach.

1.1.5. WOMEN IN DEFENCE FORCES

Why in the News?

Recently, The Supreme Court asked the Indian Army to finalise the policy for considering the promotion of women officers from the rank of colonel to brigadier.

Current Status of Women in Defence Force

- **Permanent Commission (PC):** It is being granted to Women Officers (WOs) in 12 Arms & Services in **Army**.
 - **Secretary, Ministry of Defence V. Babita Puniya & Ors. (2020):** SC directed government to **grant PC and Command Appointments (Senior Grade) to women** officers at par with male counterparts.
- **Command appointments:** WO's are also being considered for **Colonel (Select Grade) ranks in Army**.
- **Opened avenues:** for WO's to serve as **pilots** in the Corps of Army Aviation.
- **On board Ships:** Women officers are also being appointed on board warships in **Indian Navy**
- **Combat roles in IAF:** Initiated by the **IAF** in 2015 was regularized in the year 2022 into a **permanent Scheme**.

- **Women Agniveers:** As a part of the **Agnipath Scheme**, women have been enrolled as Agniveers commencing from the first batch itself in **Indian Navy**.

Significance of women in Armed Forces

- **Gender Equality and Inclusion:** It uphold the values of equality and allow equal, non-discriminatory opportunities at work **in line with Article 14, 15, and 16**.
- **Talent Pool and Recruitment:** In the era of cyber warfare and digitally equipped weapons we need the smart brains and talent, **irrespective of the gender**.
- **Role Models and Mentorship:** For E.g., Gunjan Saxena, Bhawna Kanth, Tanya Shergill etc
- **Humanitarian and Peacekeeping Missions:** Women can connect with and support local populations, especially in societies where cultural norms may limit interactions with male soldiers.
 - In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an **all-women contingent** to a UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia.



Way Forward

- **Training and Education:** Implement gender-sensitive training for military personnel to address unconscious biases and promote diversity.
- **Address Discrimination:** Provide resources for reporting, investigate complaints promptly, and ensure accountability for harassment or discrimination.
- **Adequate Accommodations:** Ensure the well-being and effectiveness of female military personnel.
- **Increase Combat Roles:** Employ women in front-line combat positions like the U.S., Israel, and other countries.
- **Family Support Programs:** For e.g., spouse co-location, provisions of maternity leave with provisions to conjoin other types of leave (viz. annual, furlough, Child Care Leave) in Indian Navy.

1.2. CARE ECONOMY

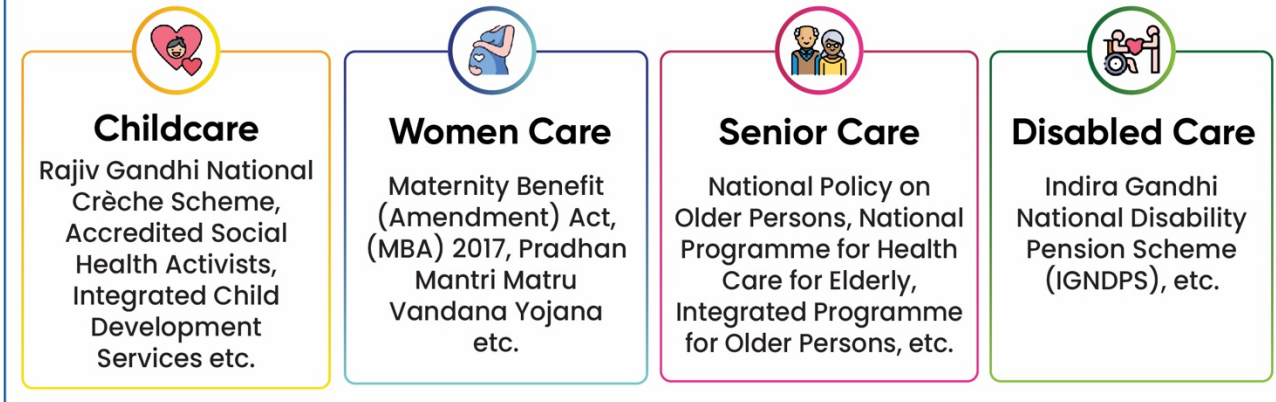
Why in the News?

Recently, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) published a report titled '**Formulating a Strategy for India's Care Economy: Unlocking Opportunities**'.

About Care Economy

- **Care Economy**, also known as the **Purple Economy**, refers to **paid and unpaid care work provided by people** as part of human survival, welfare and reproducing labour force. E.g. domestic work of caring for children and elders.
- **Globally, 249 million women and 132 million men** comprised care workforce.
- **About 76.2%** of the total amount of **unpaid care work is performed by women**.

Initiatives Taken to Promote Care Ecosystem



Need for formalization Care Economy

- **Increasing demand:** Growing populations, ageing societies, changing family structure, and shortcomings in social policies.
 - By 2050, the proportion of elderly persons is expected to **increase to 20.8%**. (India Ageing Report 2023).
- **Women Empowerment: Wide gender gaps** in unpaid domestic and care work **represents** an economic value of almost 15%-17% of the GDP.
- **Safe workplace:** Create safer environment, ensure compliance with labour regulations including minimal wages, creating more value for unpaid care work, etc.
- **Social cohesion:** Investments in care policies, services, and decent care jobs that are integrated and transformative can promote people's well-being and sustainable development.

Challenges Associated with the Care Economy

- **Lack of clear definition:** Impacts identification of care workers and the **formalization** of the care economy.
- **Disproportionate burden:** Women and girls deliver **more than 75% of unpaid care hours**.
- **Low Expenditure:** Public expenditure on the care economy is **less than 1% of GDP**.
- **Low Wages:** e.g. India's 2.5 million women Anganwadi workers (AWWs), auxiliary nurse-midwives (ANMs) and ASHAs are not paid fixed monthly salaries in many States.
- **Lack of formal training:** Inadequate professional development opportunities for care workers limit career advancement and impact the quality of care provided.
- **Absence of standards and regulations:** This can pose **dangers in private care service delivery**, as service providers are free to establish services as they best deem fit, leaving care workers unprotected.

Way Forward

- **State-involvement in the care economy:** The state needs to work towards **shifting the responsibility of care work from individual households to the state**.
- **5R Framework for Decent Care Work by ILO:**
 - **Recognize** the value of care.
 - **Reduce** the disproportionate share of unpaid care work carried by women and girls.
 - **Redistribute** care responsibilities equitably between women and men, in households, communities, the world of work, and with the state.
 - **Reward and represent** paid care workers by ensuring decent work and social protection, including for migrant workers.
- **Maternity and Paternity leave policies** should involve incentives for MSME/startups and have market-based financing.
- **Subsidies for Care Services** for the elderly and childcare to NGO/SHGs.
- **Public Investment in care infrastructure** and mobilisation of Public Private Partnership.

- **Institutional mechanisms for quality assurance** such as the establishment of Sector Skill Council, and the collection of data on paid and unpaid care work.

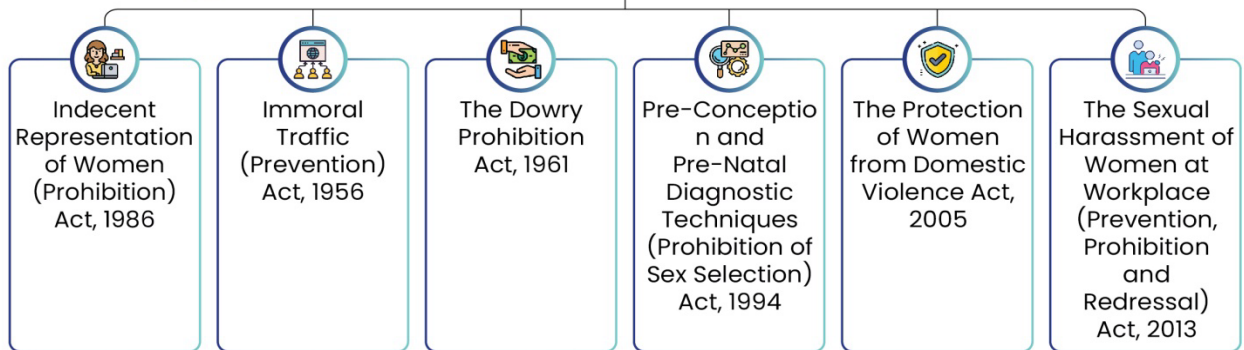
1.3. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AT A GLANCE

Violence Against Women

Key Data and Facts

Crimes against women rose 4% in 2022 as compared to 2021	Cruelty by husband or his relatives (31.4%), assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty (18.7%), and rape (7.1%).	13,479 cases were registered under the Dowry Prohibition Act.
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Legal provisions related to violence against women



Schemes to prevent violence against women

- **Fast Track Special Courts:** For time-bound trial and disposal of pending cases related to rape and POCSO Act.
- **Nirbhaya Fund:** Dedicated non-lapsable fund for ensuring safety and security of women.
- **One Stop Centres:** To support women affected by violence in both public and private spaces.
- **Sexual Harassment electronic Box (She-Box):** To facilitate registration of complaints related to sexual harassment.
- **'Mission Shakti'** with its two sub-schemes –
 - **'Sambal'** for safety and security of women: One Stop Centre (OSC), Women Helpline (WHL), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, **Nari Adalats**, etc.
 - **'Samarthya'** for women empowerment: Ujjwala, Swadhar Greh Working Women Hostel, National Creche Scheme, etc.

International Measures



1.3.1. SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE (PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL) (POSH) ACT, 2013

Why in the News?

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 completed **10 years**.

About POSH Act

- Consistent with the **Vishaka judgment (1997)**, the Act aspires to ensure **women's right to workplace equality, free from sexual harassment**.

Key Provisions of the Act

- **Definitions**
 - **Aggrieved Woman:** It includes all women who work as regular, temporary, ad hoc, or on daily wages basis, visiting at workplaces and student.
 - **Workplace:** Government organizations, NGOs, Houses, Private companies, educational institutions, farms etc.
 - **Sexual Harassment at Workplace:** It Includes unwelcome acts such as **physical contact** and sexual advances, a demand or request for **sexual favours**, making sexually **coloured remarks**, showing pornography etc.
- **Complaints Committees:** All Complaints Committees must have at least **50 per cent** representation of women.
 - **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC):** Employers are required to constitute an ICC at each workplace to receive and address complaints of sexual harassment.
 - The **Presiding Officer shall be a woman** employed at a senior level at workplace from amongst the employees.
 - **Local Complaints Committee (LCC):** Receive complaints from women working in an organisation having **less than 10 workers**.

Achievements/Outcomes of POSH Act

- **Increased Reporting:** Registered cases have increased by **54% from 2014 to 2017 (Ministry of Women and Child Development)**.
- **Women Empowerment:** Legal protection under the act created a **safer and more conducive working** environment for women, allowing them to **exercise their rights**.
- **Increase Accountability of Employers:** The Act places significant emphasis on the role of employers. It states that the employer is responsible to create a safe working environment for the employees.
- **Increased Awareness:** Initiatives like **"A Handbook and Training Module"** of Ministry of Women & Child Development on the POSH Act educated women employees about their rights.

Challenges in Implementation of the Act

- **Non-constitution of ICC:** As per **Supreme Court**, 16 out of the 30 national sports federations in the country had not constituted an **ICC** to date.
 - Also, in May 2023, the **Supreme Court noted serious lapses and uncertainty in the enforcement** of the POSH Act by the internal committee.
- **Lack of Monitoring:** The government had told the Parliament in 2019 that **it maintains no centralised data** regarding cases of harassment of women at workplaces.
- **Inaccessibility:** Law is **largely inaccessible** to women workers in the **informal sector**, which employ more than 80% of India's women.
- **Underreporting:** Fear of professional repercussions (loss of employment), requirement of concrete evidence etc.

- **Lack of clarity in the law:** About how to conduct such inquiries, lack of awareness in women employees about who to approach in case of facing harassment, etc.

Way Forward

- **The SC has issued certain directions to Union, States and UTs**
 - To undertake a **time-bound exercise** to verify whether government organisations, authorities, public sector undertakings, institutions, bodies, etc. had constituted **complaint committees**.
 - Publish the **details of their respective committees** in their websites.
 - Authorities/employers must **regularly** conduct **orientation programmes, workshops, seminars and awareness** programmes to upskill members of **committees (ICCs)**.
- **Implement technological solutions:** For confidential reporting and case management, and ensuring that evidence is **securely documented**.

1.4. PRO-LIFE VS. PRO-CHOICE

Why in the News?

Supreme Court recently denied a woman’s plea to terminate 26-week pregnancy which sparked Pro-life vs. Pro-Choice debate in India vis-à-vis the reproductive rights of women.

Pro-Life vs. Pro-Choice debate

Pro-Life	Pro-Choice
Pro-Life supporters demand that society should support the ability of women to give birth and provide life and no woman should be driven to have an abortion.	Pro-choice stance believes that women have the basic human right to decide when and whether to have children.
Arguments of Pro-Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanctity of Life: Abortion is morally wrong as life begins at conception. • Sex Selection: Legalization of abortion could lead to sex-selective abortions. • Support for Parents: Social and familial support should be the solution, not abortion. • Religious and Moral Beliefs: Some religions and individuals view abortion as morally unacceptable. • Foetal Viability: Advancements in technology show early viability, raising ethical concerns. 	Arguments of Pro-Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodily Autonomy: Abortion bans deny women control over their own bodies and reproductive rights. • Mental Health: Forced pregnancy can harm mental health of parent(s) and child upbringing. • Exceptions: Abortion should be allowed in cases of rape, incest, or danger to the mother's life. • Family Planning: Women's choice on pregnancy can address overpopulation. • Social Impact: Unwanted pregnancies can lead to broken homes due to financial hardship, etc.

Pro-Life vs. Pro-Choice Debate in India

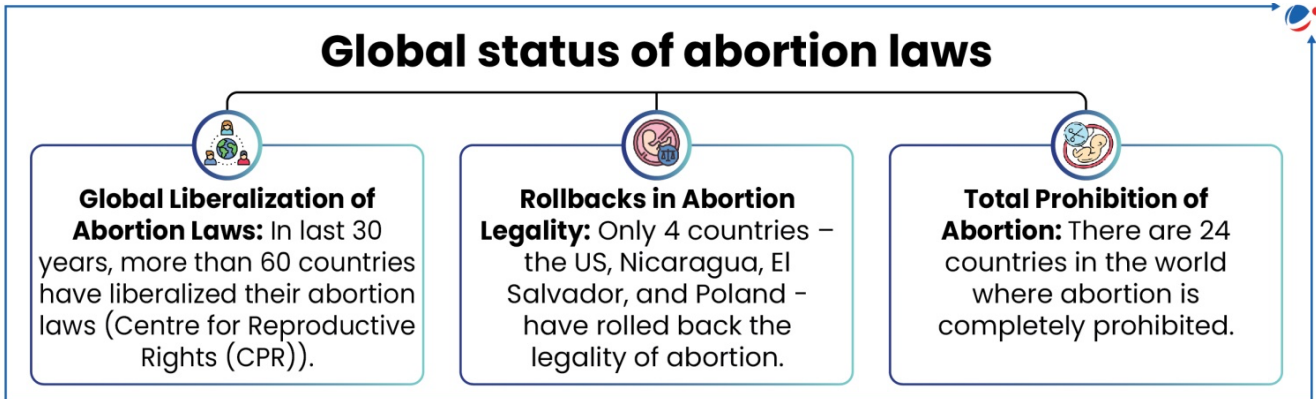
- Abortion under MTP Act, 1971, **is a qualified right** and can’t be performed solely on woman’s request.
- The judiciary adopted **careful, compassionate, and nuanced considerations** respecting the women’s **autonomy** while considering unborn child’s welfare.
- Further, the SC also noted that **medical practitioners should refrain from imposing extra-legal conditions** for abortion.

Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) (Amendment) Act, 2021

- It allows termination of pregnancy in following cases:
 - **Up to 20 weeks:** Available to all on advice of single medical practitioner (MP).
 - **Between 20 and 24 weeks:** Only in specific cases such as risk to life of pregnant women, risk of abnormalities to child, etc., subject to advice of two MPs.
 - **Beyond 24 weeks:** Only on grounds of substantial foetal abnormalities on the advice of a **medical board**.

- In 2022, the Supreme Court (SC) of India ruled that **for the sole purpose of the MTP Act, meaning of rape must include marital rape.**
 - SC also extended the **right to safe and legal abortion up to 24 weeks to unmarried and single women.**

Global status of abortion laws



Way Forward

- **Sex education:** Age-appropriate education on relationships, fertility, and sex.
- **Reproductive healthcare:** Access to comprehensive healthcare for all **to ensure that every child is wanted, every birth is safe, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity.**
- **Workplace:** **Equal pay for equal work** regardless of gender, better paid parental leave, subsidized childcare, etc., can also help reduce the cases of abortions.

1.5. SURROGACY (REGULATION) AMENDMENT RULES, 2024

Why in the News?

Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare notified **Surrogacy (Regulation) Amendment Rules, 2024** to amend the **Surrogacy (Regulation) Rules, 2022.**

More on News

- **2023 Amendment to the Rule 7 of Surrogacy (Regulation) Rules, 2022** prohibited the use of donor gametes and required both the male and female gamete must come from the intending couple.
- **2024 Amendment to the Surrogacy (Regulation) Rules, 2022** allows surrogacy using a donor gamete.
 - Benefits of this provision could be availed if **District Medical Board certifies that either of the intending couples suffers from a medical condition** necessitating the use of a donor gamete.

Surrogacy Laws in India

- **Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021**
 - **Only altruistic surrogacy is allowed** and penalises commercial surrogacy.
 - Establishes **National Assisted Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Board (NARTSB).**
 - **Eligibility criteria for surrogate mother:**
 - ✓ a **married woman (between 25-35 years)** having a **child of her own;**
 - ✓ a **surrogate only once in her lifetime** and **possess a certificate of medical and psychological fitness.**
 - **Eligibility criteria for intending couples:**
 - ✓ **married for five years, wife** is aged between **25-50 years** and **husband** between **26-55 years.**
 - ✓ **must not have any living child** (biological, adopted or surrogate).
 - ✓ should have **'essential' certificate** of proven infertility of either partner, and an **order of parentage and custody of the surrogate child,** as prescribed.
 - ✓ **Insurance coverage for 36 months for the surrogate mother,** covering any postpartum complications.


- **Abortion of surrogate child** requires **written consent of surrogate mother and authorisation** of appropriate authority in compliance with **Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971**.
- **Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2021 (ART Act)**
 - **Regulates and supervises ART clinics and banks**, to ensure safe and ethical practice of ART services.
 - Includes **treatment of surrogacy and protects the rights of surrogate mothers**.
- **Surrogacy (Regulation) Rules, 2022:**
 - **Number of attempts** of any surrogacy procedure on surrogate mother shall **not be more than 3 times**.
 - Intending woman or couple shall purchase **general health insurance coverage** in favour of surrogate mother for a period of **36 months**.

Challenges associated with Surrogacy Regulation Ecosystem

- **Lack of re-course: No specified process to review or appeal** if surrogacy applications are rejected.
- **Conflicting laws:** Contradictions between Surrogacy Act and ICMR guidelines regarding storage of embryos and gametes.
- **Ambiguity: Lack of clarity as to who constitutes as close relatives** to be surrogate mother.
- **Privacy concerns: Lack of standard procedure to ensure the privacy of the intending couple and surrogate.**
- **Lack of clarity in infertility definition:** Surrogacy Act's infertility definition excludes cases like inability to carry for 9 months or presence of multiple fibroids.

Way forward

- **Awareness:** Educate surrogate mothers about their rights, risks, and rare complications to obtain informed consent.
- **Clear Definitions:** Objectively define terms like "close relatives" and "infertility" for clarity.
- **Grievance Redress:** Establish an institutional mechanism for appeal and grievance redress to review surrogacy applications.



फाउंडेशन कोर्स सामान्य अध्ययन

प्रारंभिक एवं मुख्य परीक्षा 2025

इनोवेटिव क्लासरूम प्रोग्राम

- प्रारंभिक परीक्षा, मुख्य परीक्षा और निबंध के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सभी टॉपिक का विस्तृत कवरेज
- मौलिक अवधारणाओं की समझ के विकास एवं विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता निर्माण पर विशेष ध्यान
- एनीमेशन, पॉवर प्वाइंट, वीडियो जैसी तकनीकी सुविधाओं का प्रयोग
- अंतर - विषयक समझ विकसित करने का प्रयास
- योजनाबद्ध तैयारी हेतु करेंट ओरिएंटेड अप्रोच
- नियमित क्लास टेस्ट एवं व्यक्तिगत मूल्यांकन

- सीसेट कक्षाएं
- PT 365 कक्षाएं
- MAINS 365 कक्षाएं
- PT टेस्ट सीरीज
- मुख्य परीक्षा टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध टेस्ट सीरीज
- सीसेट टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध लेखन - शैली की कक्षाएं
- करेंट अफेयर्स मैगजीन

नोट: ऑनलाइन छात्र हमारे पाठ्यक्रम की लाइव वीडियो कक्षाएं अपने घर पर ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म पर देख सकते हैं। छात्र लाइव चैट विकल्प के माध्यम से कक्षा के दौरान अपने संदेह और विषय संबंधी प्रश्न पूछ सकते हैं। वे अपने संदेह और प्रश्न नोट भी कर सकते हैं और दिल्ली केंद्र में हमारे कक्षा सलाहकार को बता सकते हैं और हम फोन/मेल के माध्यम से प्रश्नों का उत्तर देंगे।

DELHI: 18 जुलाई, 1 PM | 28 जून, 9 AM

BHOPAL: 23 जुलाई

LUCKNOW: 18 जुलाई

JAIPUR: 25 जुलाई

JODHPUR: 11 जुलाई

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2. CHILDREN

2.1. CHILDREN'S PROLONGED USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Why in the News?

A recent survey has indicated that 60% of urban kids spend 3 hours daily on social media and other online platforms.

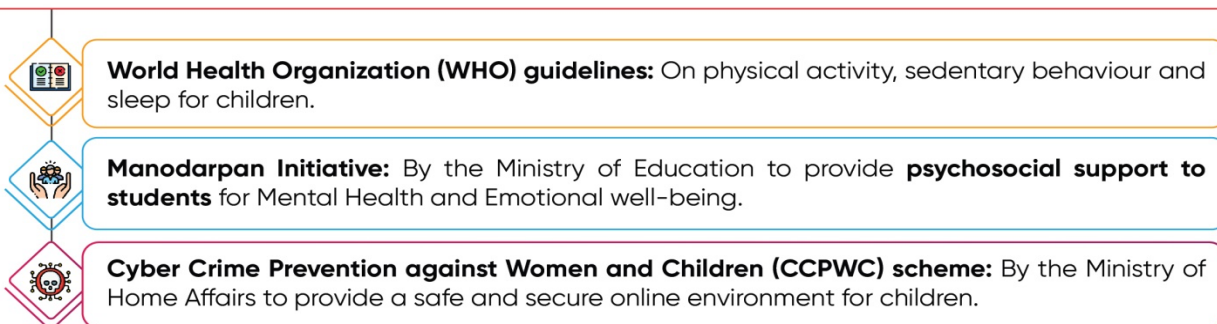
Role of different stakeholders in increasing children's access to Internet

- **Parents:** In metropolitan areas, when both parents work, children may not receive appropriate attention, resulting in the "iPad kid" issue.
- **Digital platforms like YouTube and Instagram:** Use of data mining and analysis to tailor material to children's preferences, attracting their interest.
 - Rapid shift in screen stimuli, such as colour, sound, and tales, can cause sensory overload and release happy hormones in children.
- **Schools:** COVID-19 pandemic hastened digital learning transformation without addressing negative implications.
 - Parents may feel pressure to supply technology due to the online nature of post-pandemic job.
- **Children:** Digital world provides an escape from real-life issues and anxieties.
 - Peer pressure might lead to use of latest technologies, games, and apps.
- **Government:** No clear distinction between adult and kid regulations.

Positive and Negative Effects of Social Media on Children

Positives	Negatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive: Games aid in developing cognitive abilities such as reading, writing, and counting. • Universal values: Global aspect of social media can teach students to appreciate others' perspectives and prioritise universal ideals and values. • Social Skills: Social media facilitates simple communication and interaction with others. • Creativity: Children express creativity and demonstrate talents through art, writing, or video material. • Enhanced access to information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyberbullying and Online Harassment: Leads to mental discomfort, anxiety, and sadness from bullying, harassment, or exclusion. • Fake news: Social media enables rapid information distribution. • Defective social relationship: Increased social anxiety in face-to-face conversations, preferring social media communication. • Value development: Unsupervised screen time can promote undesirable values such as misogyny, bullying, and self-harm. • Distorted sense of realities: Difficulty distinguishing online from real-life realities. • Facebook Depression: Children may associate likes with social approval, leading to depression with fewer likes. • Excessive screen time: Can cause health issues such as diminished physical activity and poor sleep habits, learning difficulty, speech disorder, etc.

Initiatives taken to address concerns associated with screen time



Way Forward

- **Parental control:** Blocking or permitting specific websites online.
 - WHO advises **no screen time for infants under 2** and limit it to **1 hour per day for children aged 2 to 4**.
- **Empower children:** Teach them about legal boundaries in age-appropriate language and explore cultural, moral, and ethical values in their communities.
- **Technology:** Maintaining children's gadgets with updated software and privacy settings to reduce data collection.
- **Internet providers:** Prevent and respond to child sexual exploitation and abuse online through kid-centered features, reporting, and feedback channels.
- **Promote physical activity:** Promote initiatives like “Fit India Movement” to foster discipline and teamwork in children.
- **Regulation:** Local norms can align with 2020 ITU Guidelines on Child Online Protection.
 - 2020 ITU Guidelines recommended to **integrate existing policy frameworks**, develop **educational resources including Internet safety messages and materials**, etc.

2.1.1. CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE MATERIAL (CSAM)

Why in the News?

Recently, the **Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** issued notices to social media platforms, including Telegram, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube, to **remove Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)** from their platforms in India.

What is Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)?

- **Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)** refers to any content that depicts sexually explicit activities involving a child.
- CSAM are **part of Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE)** that incorporates activities such as luring children into sexual chats, production, and distribution of child CSAM, live streaming sexual assault of minors, etc.
 - **About 4.5 lakh cases of spread of CSAM** have been reported in India as of May 2023.
 - Globally, it is estimated that **up to 1 billion children aged 2–17 years, have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence**.



Impact of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) on Survivors

- **Guilt & Shame:** Survivors may blame themselves and feel guilty.
- **Mental Health:** Exposure to CSAM can lead to anxiety, depression, and PTSD.
- **Social Isolation:** It can cause low self-esteem, hinder relationships, and worsen isolation.
- **Substance Abuse:** Survivors may turn to alcohol and substances.
- **Disease Burden:** CSAM can contribute to Sexually Transmitted Infections, HIV, and other health issues (unintended pregnancies, etc.).



Measures taken to curb CSAM

- **Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000:** Imposes **stringent penalties and fines for online transmission** of obscene or pornographic content including CSAM.
 - Other statutory measures include **POCSO Act (2012), Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (2000), Digital Personal Data Protection Act (2023), etc.**
- **Information Technology (Intermediary Liability Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021:** Requires large social media platforms to **deploy technology-based measures** to proactively identify information that depicts child sexual abuse.
- **Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE) Prevention/Investigation Unit** set up by CBI.
- **Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC):** for awareness under **Nirbhaya Fund**.
- **Initiatives by Social Platforms:** YouTube uses an **automatic tool called Child Sexual Abuse Imagery (CSAI) Match** to proactively weed out CSAM.

Challenges in Countering Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)

- **Limited Awareness:** Few people know about CSAM reporting platforms.
 - In 2020, only 1,102 cybercrimes against children were reported through **National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP)**, compared to 2.7 lakh reported to National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).
- **Privacy vs. Safety:** Breaking encryption to trace CSAM may violate online privacy rights.
- **Anonymity:** Fake accounts make it difficult to identify and prosecute perpetrators and viewers.
- **Online learning and apps increase vulnerability:** From 2019 - 2020, Cybercrimes against children rose by 400% due to COVID-19 and shift to online mode of services such as education, etc.

Way Forward

- **Regulation:** Social media platforms must implement proactive content moderation algorithms and effective Reporting mechanisms.
 - Develop a National Framework for Child Online Safety to recognize the importance of safe physical and online environments.
- **Targeting online abusers:** Identify and combat online grooming and preparatory behaviour.
- **Awareness:** Undertake nationwide campaign through mass media and integrate OCSAE modules into education curricula.
- **Collaboration:** Explore partnerships with countries like Australia that have robust mechanisms to address OCSAE.
- **Child Protection:** Develop enhanced online safety measures specifically for children.

2.2. AGE OF CONSENT

Why in the News?

22nd Law Commission in its 283rd report advised that the age of consent should be not reduced from 18 to 16 years.

More on News

- Law Commission received a reference to consider the reducing age of consent from 18 to 16 under the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012**.
- **POCSO Act, 2012** was enacted to protect children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography.
 - The Act also provides for the establishment of **Special Courts** for the trial of such offences.

What is the Age of Consent?

- Age of consent is defined as the age at which one is **considered legally competent to consent for sexual activity**.

- **POCSO Act fixed the age of being categorised as a child at 18 years**, thus making it the **default ‘age of consent’**.

Age of consent under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023

- **Age of consent for a married woman** under the definition of rape (Section 63 BNS) has been **increased from 15 to 18 years**.
 - Previously, it was **15 years for married women under section 375 of the IPC**.

Arguments for Reducing Age of Consent	Arguments against reducing the Age of Consent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising Criminal Cases under POCSO Act: Girls' parents urge the police to file POCSO Act charges in cases of elopement or consensual sexual conduct. • Changing social realities: Early puberty and consensual relationships are increasing due to social media and internet access; 39% of women had sex before 18 (NFHS-5). • Recognising sexual autonomy: Sexual autonomy includes the right to desired sexual behaviour and protection from unwanted sexual aggression. • Global practices: Consent age is 13-18 worldwide. The consent age in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy, and Portugal is 14. In England and Wales, 16 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional or psychological immaturity: Hinders making informed decisions by adolescents about sexual activity. • Convergence of Age of Consent with Age of Marriage: Due to this social approval of lowering consent age is challenging. • Child exploitation and trafficking: Provides a safe harbour provision to coerce minor girls into subjugation, marital rape and other forms of abuse, including trafficking. • Child marriage and early pregnancy: This could undermine the fight against child marriage by allowing parents to marry minor girls.

Key Recommendations of the Law Commission

- **Guided judicial discretion:** Court may **sentence the accused below the prescribed minimum sentence** to address cases where a child aged 16-18 has tacit approval in fact but not legal consent.
 - The **age difference** between the accused and child **should not exceed 3 years**.
 - Discretion should be used if there is tactical approval, no criminal history, and excellent conduct after the offense.
- **Amend Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015:** To allow the Juvenile Justice Board to handle POCSO Act cases involving persons aged 16-18 instead of criminal courts.
- **Awareness generation:** Knowledge dissemination about sex, early sex repercussions, contraception, safe sexual behaviour, and the POCSO Act.

2.3. CHILD MARRIAGE

Why in the News?

A recent study conducted by **Lancet Global Health report-2023** has analysed the prevalence of child marriage across states and Union Territories in India for the time period **1993-2021**.

More on the News

- **Key Findings of study**
 - **Decline:** Child marriage in girls declined **from 49-4% in 1993 to 22-3% in 2021**.
 - **Current situation:** **1 in 5 girls** and **1 in 6 boys** are still married below the legal age of marriage.
 - **Prevalence in states:** Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra (in decreasing order) accounted for **more than 50%** of child marriages in **girls**.
 - **Exception:** **Manipur** was the only state that experienced an **increase** in the prevalence of child marriage in girls from 1993 to 2021.
- Sustainable Development Goal **target 5.3 aims to end child marriage** in girls by 2030.

Reasons of overall decline in Child Marriage

- **Implementation of laws:** Appointment of **Child Marriage Prohibition officers** under Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006) and implementation of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act (2012), etc.
- **Increase in girl education:** Due to effective implementation of schemes like Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, etc.

Important examples of states to curb child marriage

- **West Bengal: Kanyashree scheme** offers financial aid to girls wanting to pursue higher studies.
- **Uttar Pradesh: UP Free Education Scheme 2023 for Girls Till Graduation.**

Reasons for prevalence of child marriage

- **Poverty:** Families may view child marriage as a solution to lessen financial strain by passing kid responsibility to the spouse's family.
- **Cultural and Social Norms:** Traditional practices and patriarchal marriage beliefs. In some tribal communities, daughters are married soon after puberty.
- **Education:** 58% of girls without higher education were married before 18 years old, compared to only 4% of those with higher education. (NFHS-5)
- **Ineffective legal enforcement:** Inconsistent Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (PCMA) and personal laws, inadequate birth and marriage registration systems, and difficulties in verifying girl's age.
- **Safety and security:** Parents may use child marriage to safeguard their daughters from sexual abuse, rape, and other crimes against girls.

Impact of Child marriage

- **Health risks:** Increased risk of early pregnancy, maternal mortality, and sexually transmitted infections.
- **Intergenerational effects:** Children of young mothers may face health and developmental challenges.
- **Gender-based violence:** Child brides face higher risks of abuse.
- **Child marriage is a recognised form of sexual and gender-based violence and a human rights violation.**
- **Economic:** Perpetuates poverty by limiting educational and employment opportunities.
- **Human rights and mental health:** Can cause trauma, depression, and loss of childhood.

Way forward

- **Rights-based health information and services:** Including sexual and reproductive health information to enable informed choice and reduce unintended pregnancy.
- **Legal enforcement:** Strengthen **civil registration systems** by making birth and marriage registration **mandatory** and free.
- **Community engagement:** Work with religious and cultural leaders to raise awareness of the law, **promoting positive masculinity** among men, implement community-based programs to shift attitudes, etc.
- **Skill development:** Implementing **Shivraj Patil Committee (2011)** recommendations, like vocational training for girls, reduced child marriages in Karnataka from 42% (2005-06) to 21.3% (2019-20).

2.3.1. PROHIBITION OF CHILD MARRIAGE AMENDMENT (PCMA) BILL, 2021

Why in the News?

Parliamentary panel assigned the task to study the 'Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021' has been given another extension by Rajya Sabha chairman.

About Prohibition of Child Marriage Amendment (PCMA) Bill, 2021

- Introduced in Lok Sabha, was then referred to the **Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports** (under the Rajya Sabha).



- The bill is based on the **recommendations of Jaya Jaitley committee (2020)** where it suggested increasing the age of **marriage for females to 21 from 18**.
- **Key provisions of PCMA (Amendment) Bill, 2021**
 - **Objective:** Seeks to bring parity in the **minimum age of marriage for men and women** overriding all existing laws, including any custom, usage, or practice governing the parties in relation to marriage.
 - Would amend the **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006**.
 - **Definition of child:** It provides that child means a male or female who has not completed twenty-one years of age.

Arguments for Increasing Age of Marriage	Arguments against Increasing Age of Marriage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gender Neutrality: Ensures equal legal standards for both men and women. ● Education and Workforce Participation: Allows women more time to pursue higher education and enter the workforce. ● Health Risks: Reduces health risks associated with adolescent pregnancies (10-19 years) compared to those aged 20-24 years (WHO). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Current Marriage Age: The average age for women to marry is 22.7 years. ● Patriarchal Norms: Increasing the marriage age may not address deep-rooted social and cultural patriarchal norms. ● Legal Age for Marriage: Individuals should have the liberty to marry as adults after 18 years of age. The Law Commission's 2018 report recommended 18 as the minimum legal age for both men and women.

Conclusion

Raising the marriage age can advance gender equality and improve women's health and education, but its success requires tackling social norms, ensuring effective enforcement, and supporting women with education and economic opportunities.

2.4. CHILD ADOPTION

Why in the News?

Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice, presented the **118th Report on the Subject 'Review of Guardianship and Adoption Laws'**.

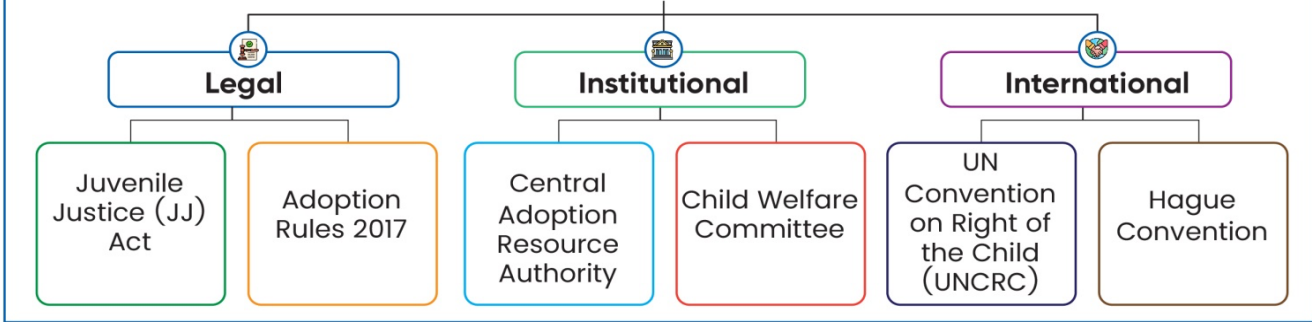
About adoption

- Adoption means the **process through which the adopted child** is permanently separated from biological parents and **becomes the lawful child of the adoptive parents** with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities.
- It is estimated that there are **29.6 million stranded, orphaned and abandoned children** in India. **Just 3000-4000 get adopted annually**.

Reasons underscoring low adoption rate

- **Unregistered CCIs:** Many orphaned children aren't placed in care due to unregistered childcare institutions.
- **CARINGS system issues:** Centralized system hinders matching suitable children with prospective parents.
- **Adoption disruption:** High instances of children being returned due to lack of preparedness and proper counseling.
- **Legal alternatives:** Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Law, 1956 provides another adoption route.
 - **Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 (HAMA)** (applicable only to Hindus) and **the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 (JJ Act)** (all religion) both deal with adoption **yet have differing criteria**.
- **Adoption prejudices:** Biases against adopting older children and those with disabilities.
- **Discriminatory rules:** Current rules exclude homosexual couples, trans-couples, and single men (cannot adopt girls).

Adoption Provision



INITIATIVES TO EASE THE ADOPTION

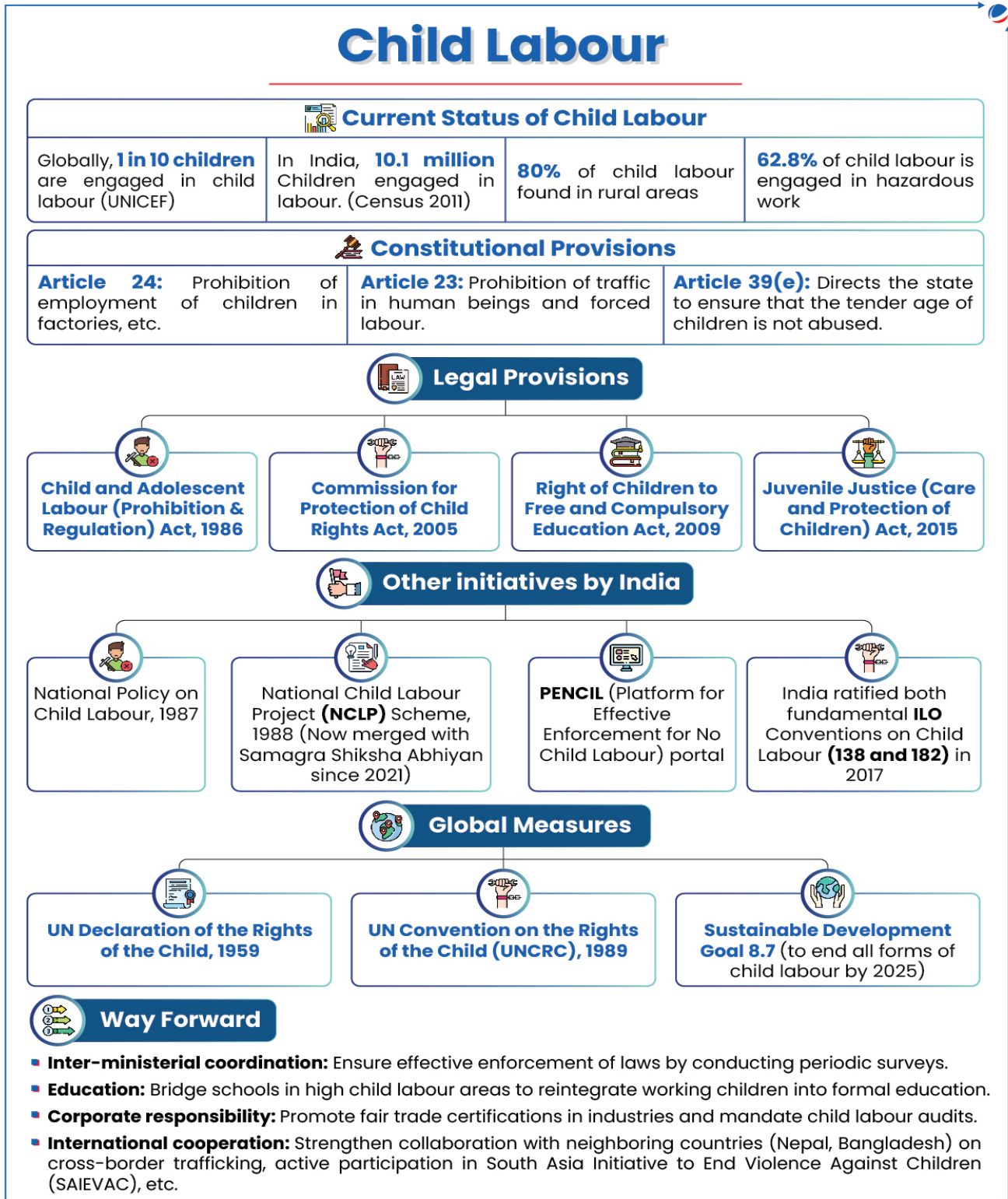
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">2021 amendment Act to the JJ Act, 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Empowers District Magistrates (DMs) and Additional DMs to authorise orders of adoption. ▶ Allows CARA to carry out the functions of the Central Authority under the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Inter-country Adoption. 	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Easing inter country adoption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Amendment to Adoption Regulations 2021 allows CARA to issue the 'No- Objection Certificate (NOC)' to prospective parents who opt for inter-country adoption under the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (HAMA), 1956. ▶ Two-year mandatory period that an adoptive family would have to stay in the country for constant monitoring by CARA and other authorities has been waived off. ▶ The Indian missions will monitor the progress and security of the adopted child. 	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mission Vatsalya to upscale institutional care and services for children in difficult circumstances. ▶ Online registration portal CARINGS (Child Adoption Resource Information and Guidance System) ▶ Ratification of Hague Convention on Inter- country Adoption, 1993 that establishes safeguards to ensure that intercountry adoptions take place in the best interests of the child.
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Way Forward

- Recommendation of parliamentary committee
 - **Review of Laws on Guardianship:** The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act should omit the term 'illegitimate' for children born out of wedlock as no child is illegitimate.
 - **Make registration with CARA mandatory.**
 - New legislation **should cover LGBTQ community.**
 - Need to bring **Adoption Laws under a single Ministry for better monitoring and implementation.**
 - ✓ Adoption related matters are being dealt by **Ministry of Law and Justice and Ministry of Women and Child Development.**
- **State-specific adoption choices:** Allow prospective parents to adopt children from their respective states.
- **Mandatory CCC registration:** Register all Child Care Centres (CCCs) with the CWC within a set timeframe or face closure.

- **Transparency in adoption:** Make the adoption process more transparent.
- **Rural assistance:** Provide special help to rural families unaware of or hesitant about legal adoption procedures.
- **Nationwide IEC campaign:** Combat adoption prejudice and social stigma.

2.5. CHILD LABOUR AT A GLANCE



3. OTHER VULNERABLE SECTIONS

3.1. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AT A GLANCE

Indigenous People

Indigenous people are distinct social and cultural groups that share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live e.g. Santhal, Khasi, Chenchu etc.

Constitutional Measures	Legislative Measures	Government Schemes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 342: Notification of STs Schedule V and VI (Article 244) Article 275: Grant of special funds for promoting the welfare of STs Article 338A: National Commission for STs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) Pradhan Mantri Vanbandhu Vikas Yojana Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojna (PMAAGY) Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)

Global Initiatives

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (World Tribal Day) is observed every year on August 9.

Approaches to Tribal Development in India



Isolationist approach

Non- interference with tribesmen's rights and their traditional manner of living.

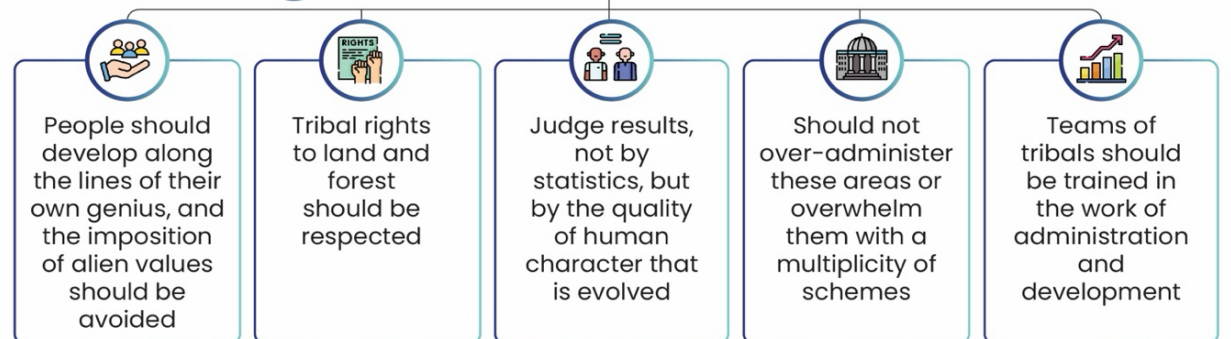
Assimilation approach

'Mainstreaming' tribal communities, often by encouraging them to adopt the language, customs, and lifestyle of the dominant society.

Integration approach

It aims at developing a creative adjustment between the tribes and non tribes leading to a responsible partnership. It is reflected in the Panchsheel principles for Tribal development.

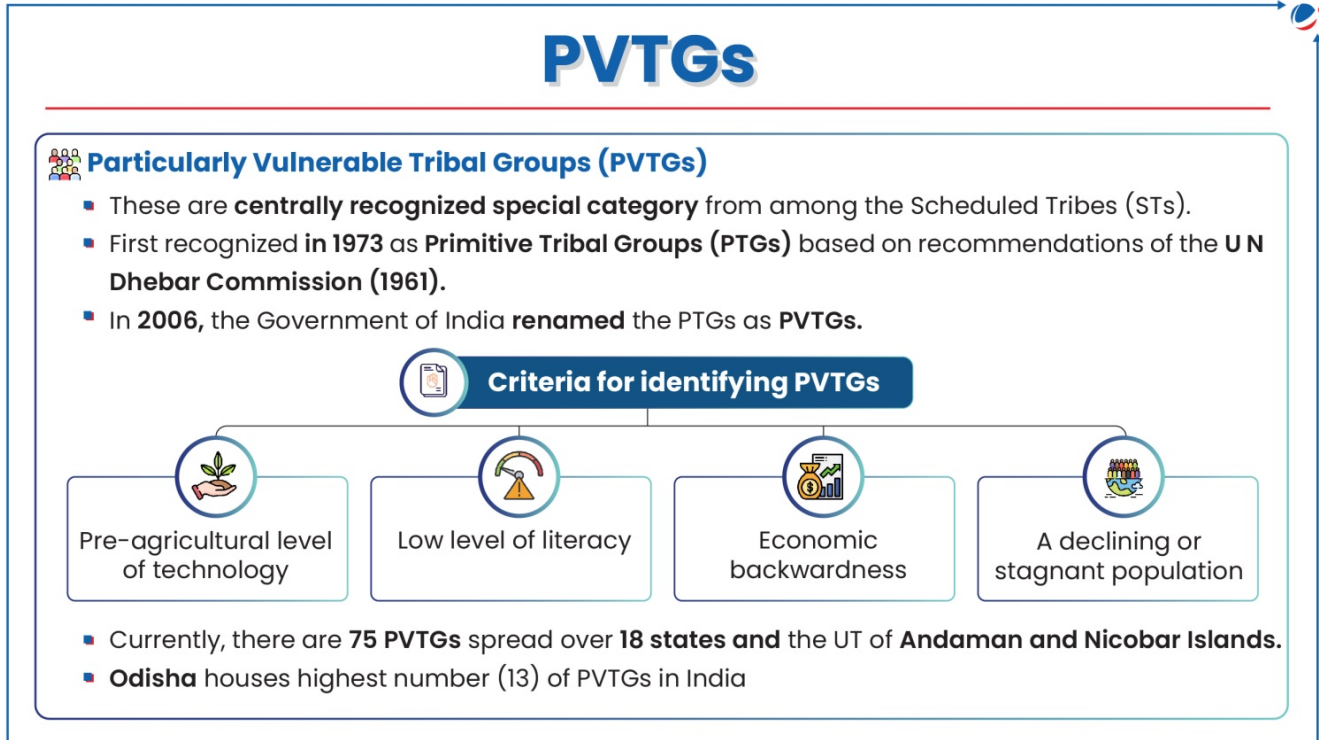
Panchsheel Principles for Tribal development



3.2. PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS (PVTGS)

Why in the News?

Recently, the Union government launched **PM JANMAN (PM- Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan)** on Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (Tribal Pride Day).



About PM JANMAN

- Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission:** Announced in the Union Budget 2023-24.
- Scope and Funding:** Comprises 11 critical interventions across 9 ministries with an estimated outlay of ₹24,104 crore over 3 years.
- Objectives:** It aims to **saturate PVTG households and habitations with basic facilities** such as safe housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, improved access to education, health, and nutrition, etc.
- Additional Goals:** Saturation will be ensured for Sickle Cell Disease Elimination, TB Elimination, 100% immunization, PM Surakshit Matritva Yojana, PM Matru Vandana Yojana, PM Poshan, etc.

Issues faced by PVTGs

- Erosion of identity:** Traditional systems clash with modern ones, e.g., Extinction of tribal dialect.
- Forced displacement:** Development, disasters, and conflict displace tribals from their lands.
 - e.g., **Kalahandi Forest Department forcefully evicted 32 tribal (Kondh) families (2020)**.
- Low literacy:** Poverty, infrastructure, and language barriers limit education for tribals.
 - The literacy rate among STs is just 59%** which is 73% among the general population. (Census 2011).
- Triple health burden:** Malnutrition and communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, and **mental illness and addiction** plague tribal communities.
- Debt bondage:** Poverty, weak laws, and limited employment trap tribals in debt-slavery.
- Climate vulnerability:** Close connection to nature exposes tribals to climate change impacts.
- Marginalization & discrimination:** Social exclusion limits access to education, healthcare, and jobs.

Way Forward

- **Identify and assess PVTG vulnerabilities:** Conduct a special census to assess health, education, and nutrition, and objectively assess their debt levels.
- **Rights-based development:** Implement policies protecting and promoting tribal rights, including requiring free, prior, and informed consent for any development on their land.
- **Participatory governance:** Integrate PVTGs into existing governance structures and programs, while strengthening their traditional institutions and systems.
- **Culturally sensitive services:** Develop preventive and curative healthcare systems considering ecological and cultural aspects.
- **Relevant education:** Develop locally relevant, culturally sensitive education curricula in tribal languages.

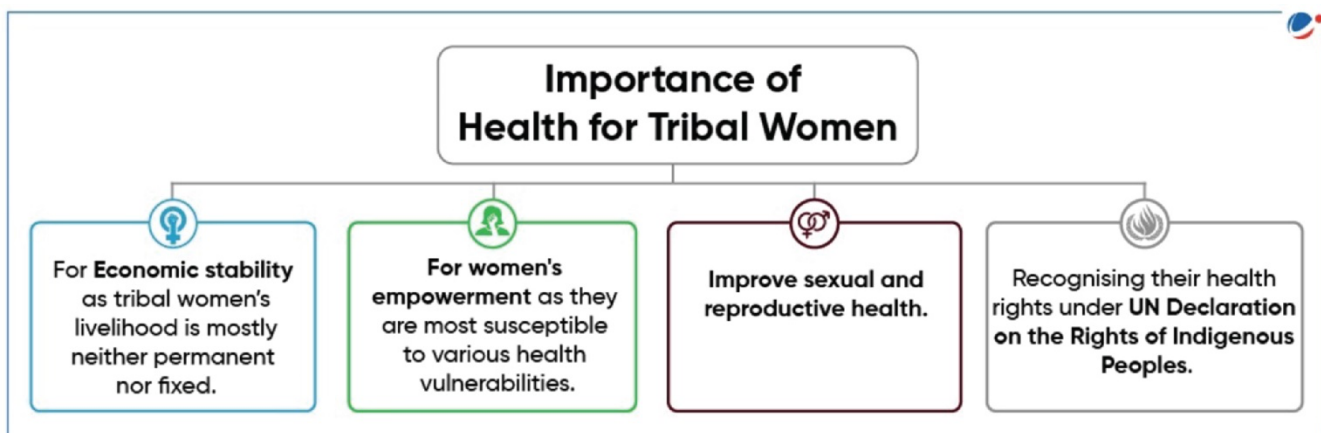
3.2.1. TRIBAL HEALTH

Why in the News?

Recently, the Standing Committee on Empowerment of Women submitted a report in Lok Sabha titled “**Health Facilities for Tribal Women**”.

Key findings of the Report

- **High Mortality Rates:** Child marriage, early motherhood, low body mass index, and high anaemia rates contribute to high mortality among tribal women, with 64.5% anaemia prevalence and 25.5% underweight.
- **Data Deficiency:** There is insufficient data on tribal healthcare, particularly for women and girls.
- **Teenage Pregnancy:** Teenage pregnancy rates are highest among Scheduled Tribes (STs).
- **Triple Disease Burden:** Tribal people face a triple disease burden: communicable, nutritional, and non-communicable diseases.



Challenges faced by the healthcare system for the tribal health

- **Communication Barriers:** Language and cultural differences hinder effective communication between healthcare providers and tribal patients, causing misunderstandings.
- **Distrust in Modern Healthcare:** Ignoring indigenous healing methods fosters distrust in modern healthcare among tribal populations.
- **Geographical Remoteness:** Tribal communities often reside in remote, inaccessible areas with poor transportation infrastructure.
- **Inadequate Healthcare Access:** Lack of skilled healthcare leads to delayed diagnoses, inappropriate treatment, and limited access to specialized care.
- **Misaligned Healthcare Assumptions:** Tribal healthcare is often lumped with rural healthcare, assuming similar health problems and needs.

Way forward

- **Parliamentary panel suggested:**
 - **Creation of a Separate database on all aspects of tribal healthcare** by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for better assessment of welfare measures.
 - **Better infrastructure**, such as all-weather roads, is needed to ensure timely healthcare access for the tribal population, including pregnant women.
 - **Organize special drives to educate women** and their husbands on the proper use and benefits of modern contraceptives.
- **Separate plan for tribal population:** Delineate the tribal and rural populations and promote behaviours and practices that do not directly challenge the norms and customs.
- **Integration of traditional medicine:** The Ministry of Tribal Affairs should coordinate with the Ayush Ministry to integrate traditional healers and promote modern medicine.
- **Reforming governance structure for tribal health.**

Initiatives under the National Health Mission for beneficiaries in tribal areas

The NHM envisages the achievement of **universal access to equitable, affordable & quality healthcare** services that are accountable and responsive to people's needs.

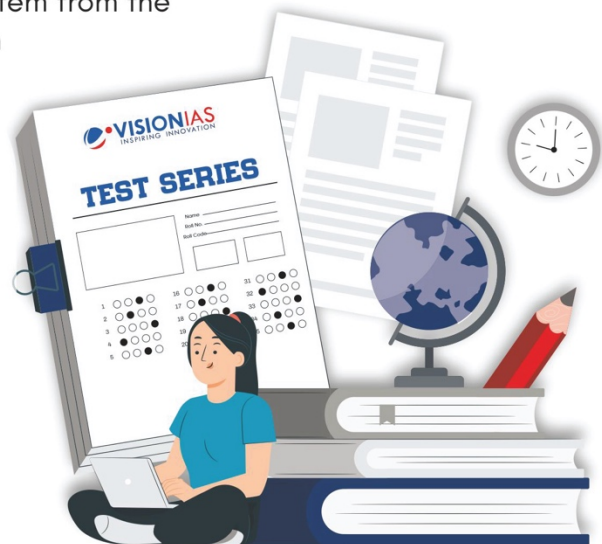
- **Ayushman Bharat- Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)** established by transforming the Sub-Health Centres (SHCs) and Primary Health Centres (PHCs), as part of the Ayushman Bharat.
- The population norms for setting up Health Facilities in **vulnerable areas are relaxed**.
- States/UTs can deploy Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) for diverse healthcare services
- **National Free Drugs Service Initiative and the National Free Diagnostic Service Initiative** launched to reduce health service expenses.
- Tribal majority districts with below-average health indices receive more resources per capita.

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3.3. TRANSGENDERS AT A GLANCE

Transgenders

Transgender person means a person whose gender does not match with the gender assigned to that person at birth and includes trans-man or trans-woman, person with intersex variations, genderqueer, etc.



Important Judicial Pronouncements related to Transgenders

NALSA vs Uoi (2014) Legal Recognition for Transgender Persons as 'Third Gender'.	K.S. Puttaswamy vs Uoi (2017) Recognition of the right to sexual orientation as an aspect of privacy.	Navtej Singh Johar vs Uoi (2018) Decriminalization of Homosexuality	Deepika Singh vs Central Administrative Tribunal (2022) Atypical families such as unmarried or queer relationships are also entitled to equal protection of law (under Article 14).
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LGBTQIA+ rights across the world

Currently, there are more than 130 countries that have decriminalized homosexuality.	The Netherlands was the first country to legalise same-sex marriages in 2001	More than 30 countries around the world have legalized the same-sex marriages.
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Measures taken for Welfare and Empowerment of Transgender Persons

- **National Council for Transgender Persons:** Established under Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
- **Government Initiatives**
 - **Garima Greh:** Shelter Homes for Transgender Persons.
 - **National Portal for Transgender Persons:** To obtain certificate of identity and identity card without any physical interface.



3.4. SUPREME COURT JUDGMENT ON LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS

Why in the News?

Supreme Court (SC) in **Supriyo @ Supriya Chakraborty vs Union of India case** unanimously refused to accord legal recognition to marriages between persons of the same sex and left it for the legislature and executive to decide, citing them being **matters of policy**.

More on News

- While all five judges **acknowledged the need to eliminate discrimination against same-sex couples**, they **did not unanimously agree on granting queer couples** the designation of a legally recognized **"civil union."**
- Civil Union is a legal recognition, originally created for same-sex couples in jurisdictions where they are not legally allowed to marry
 - It is basically a **halfway approach between non-recognition and full recognition** to homosexual marriages.

Issues raised by petitioners and court verdict

Issues	Court Verdict
Right of transgender persons to marry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unanimously held that there was no fundamental, unequivocal right to marry in India. Transgender persons in heterosexual relations have the right to marry under the existing laws, including in personal laws regulating marriages.
Right to enter a Civil Union for queer couple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court cannot prescribe a choice of civil unions to queer couples. Government is not obligated to recognize bouquet of rights flowing from such a Union. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil Union is a legal recognition, originally created for same- sex couples in jurisdictions where they are not legally allowed to marry.
Interpretation of Special Marriage Act (SMA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court declined to invalidate or interpret SMA in a gender-neutral manner, stating that such actions would encroach upon legislative domain and could have a "cascading" effect on other laws.
Adoption rights for non-heterosexual couples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upheld restriction imposed by Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) on queer couples from adopting. Striking down the rules may have deleterious, "disastrous" and "anomalous outcome" that only legislature and executive could remedy.

Other key Highlights of the Judgment

- Courts limit the question to secular laws:** During the hearings, the bench expressed that it would confine the issue only to the Special Marriage Act and would not touch personal laws.
 - If the court were to interpret HMA to include LGBTQIA+ marriages, the SC would also have to consider the bundle of rights dealing with adoption, guardianship and inheritance available to heterosexual couples.
- Judicial restraint:** Judgement signifies **judicial restraint** wherein court refrained from taking on role of legislature or executive.
- Future discussions paved:** The judgment's observations and dissenting opinions may guide future discussions on LGBTQIA+ rights.
- Prevention of discrimination:** Court also directed government and police to prevent discrimination against the queer community.
 - In pursuance of this direction, Union Ministry of Law and Justice notified a 6-member committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary to recommend measures to ensure:
 - ✓ **no discrimination in access to goods and services** for the queer community,
 - ✓ queer people are **not subjected to involuntary medical treatments, violence, coercion**, etc.

Conclusion

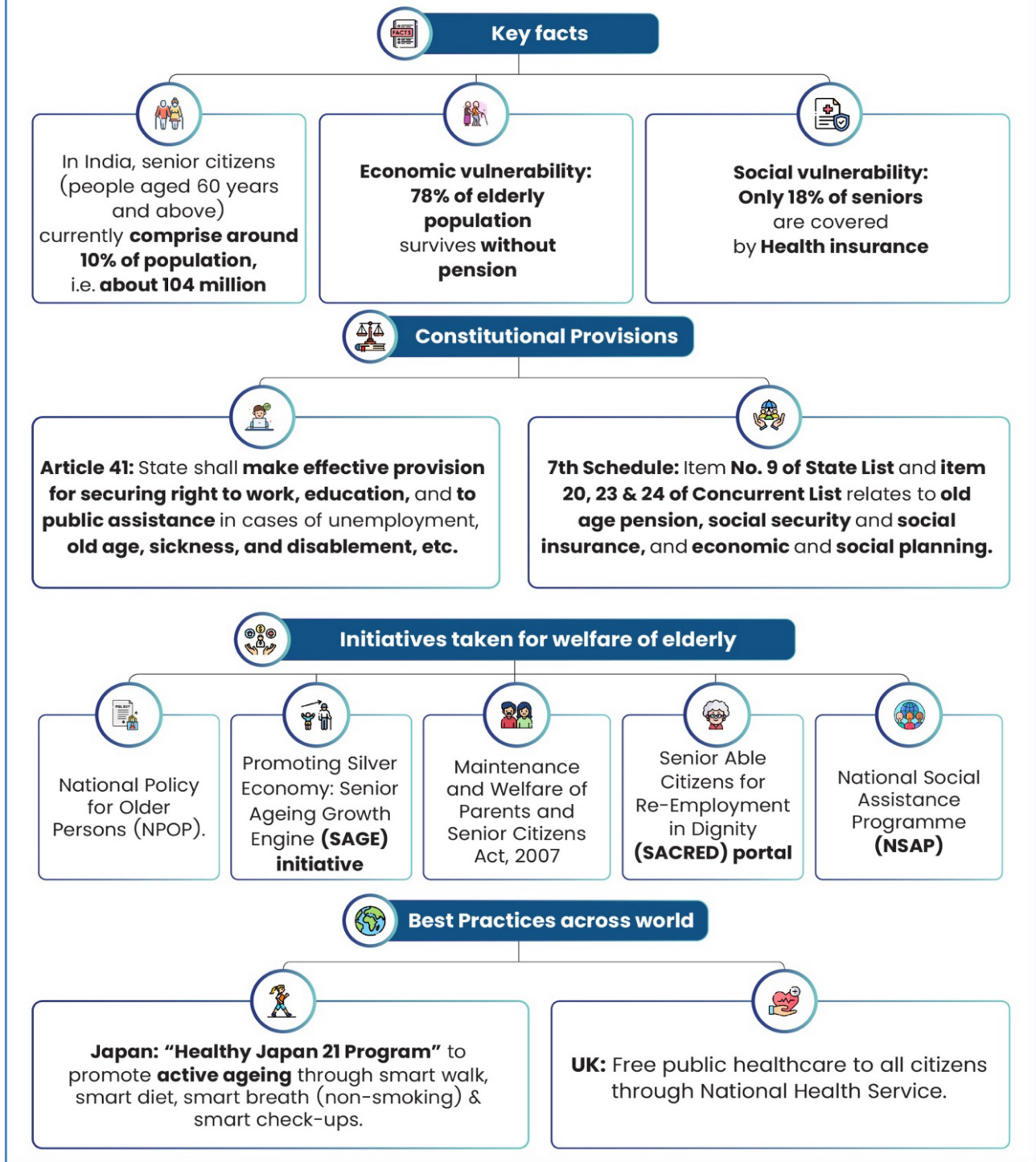
Though the judgement came as a setback for LGBTQIA+ rights, the assurance by the Union Government to constitute a **committee under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary** gives a ray of hope in the struggle for equality.

3.5. ELDERLY IN INDIA

Why in the News?

Recently, NITI Aayog released a position paper titled **"Senior Care Reforms in India: Reimagining the Senior Care Paradigm"**.

Overview of Senior-care



Challenges faced by Elderly in India

- **Health Domain:** Fragmented services and a focus on other health priorities leave geriatric care underdeveloped.
- **Social Domain:** Implementation gaps in social security schemes, rural-urban disparities, gender-based inequalities, and inadequate elder-friendly infrastructure limit access and support.

- Only 12% of elderly people are aware of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act 2007 and Annapurna scheme.
- **Economic Domain:** Nearly 70% of the elderly individuals depend on family for daily needs.
- **Digital Domain:** Approximately 85.8% of respondents were digitally and computer illiterate. (Age Well Foundation Survey)
- **Undervalued and underpaid care economy:** Care work is often viewed as a low-skilled job and is mostly performed by women.

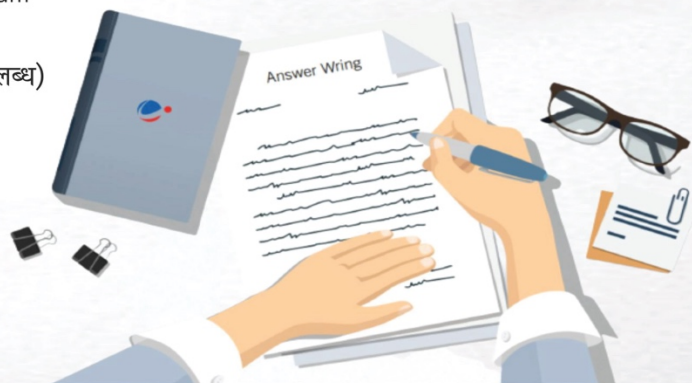
Key Recommendations

- **Health Empowerment:**
 - **Promote health literacy among seniors and caregivers** to enhance understanding of geriatric health issues and related risks.
 - **Increase accessibility of services.**
 - **Incentivize preventive health** – health checks, annual health assessments, vaccinations, etc.
 - **Strengthen research & research institutions** to enhance knowledge repository of geriatric healthcare.
 - **Synergies between public and private sectors** through PPP to develop low-cost healthcare delivery models.
- **Social Empowerment:**
 - **Sensitize larger community** on challenges experienced by elderly, to facilitate their social inclusion.
 - **Build and strengthen provisions of Assisted Living Facilities** like adult day-care.
 - **Elder for elderly model:** Peer support groups where seniors can exchange experiences and information on various issues.
 - **‘One-stop’ centralized portal** for senior care to provide easy access to services to seniors.
- **Economic Empowerment:**
 - **Reskilling of elderly population:** Foster age-friendly labour markets and employment opportunities.
 - **Pension support to the elderly population** from the unorganized sector.
- **Digital Empowerment:**
 - **Improve access to digital devices for seniors** by making them **affordable** through senior discounts.
 - **Increase digital literacy** among the elderly population.

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3.6. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDs) AT A GLANCE

Persons With Disabilities (PwDs)

PwD means a person with **long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment** which in interaction with various barriers may **hinder their full and effective participation in society** on an equal basis with others.

Current status in India



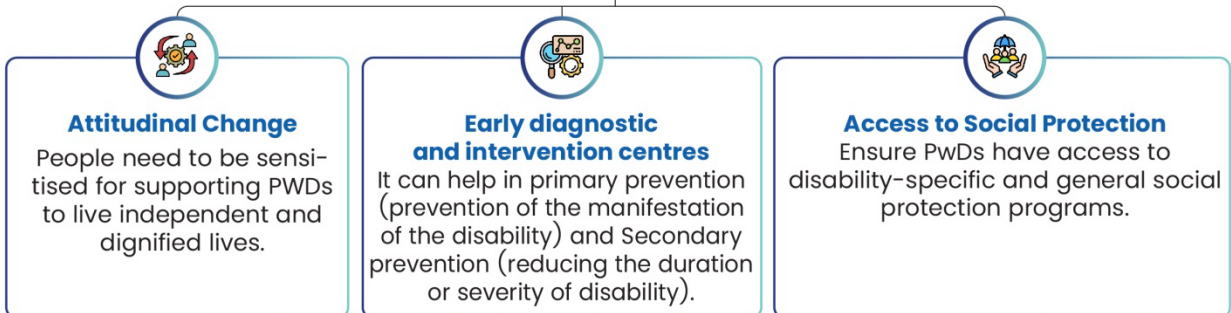
Challenges faced by PwDs

- **Stereotype:** PwDs have to face stigma, prejudice, and discrimination at multiple levels.
- **Accessibility:** Inaccessible facilities hinder access to schools, hospitals, and shopping.
- **Communication challenges:** Faced by people having disabilities for hearing, speaking, reading, writing, and/or understanding.
- **Policy barriers:** Lack of awareness or enforcement of supportive laws.
- **Poverty and disability reinforce one another:** Poor health and nutrition can lead to disability and viceversa.

Initiatives for mainstreaming PwDs

- Signing of **United Nations Convention on Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Biwako Millennium Framework** and adoption of **Incheon Strategy** for PwDs in Asia and Pacific.
- **Right to free education** for every PwD child **up to 18 years of age**.
- Enactment of **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPD) Act, 2016**, recognises **21 disabilities**, prescribes **4% and 5% reservation** in government employment and education (respectively).
- **National Education Policy (NEP), 2020** enables **barrier-free access for all children** with disabilities.
- **ADIP Scheme** (Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/ Fitting of Aids and Appliances)
- **National Fund for PwDs**, Accessible India Campaign, Unique ID for PwDs project, etc.
- Addressing as '**Divyangjan**': remove stigma and enable **dignified living** of PwDs.

Way forward for mainstreaming and easing life of PwDs



3.6.1. RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (RPWD) ACT, 2016

Why in the News?

Recently, in the **Seema Girija Lal & Anr Vs Union of India & Ors case** the Supreme Court expressed disappointment at the inadequate implementation of the RPwD Act, 2016 across states.

More on News

- The Court noted that many states including **Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, UP, Punjab, Tripura, and UT of Chandigarh** were lagging in the implementation of various provisions of the Act including:
 - **appointment of State Commissioners,**
 - **creation of State Funds for PwDs,**
 - **formation of assessment boards for disability certificates,**
 - establishment of **Special Courts, etc.**

About Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016

- The Act aims to ensure that **all PwDs can lead their lives with dignity**, without discrimination and **with equal opportunities**.
- It was enacted to give effect to the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) of 2007**, to which **India is a signatory**.

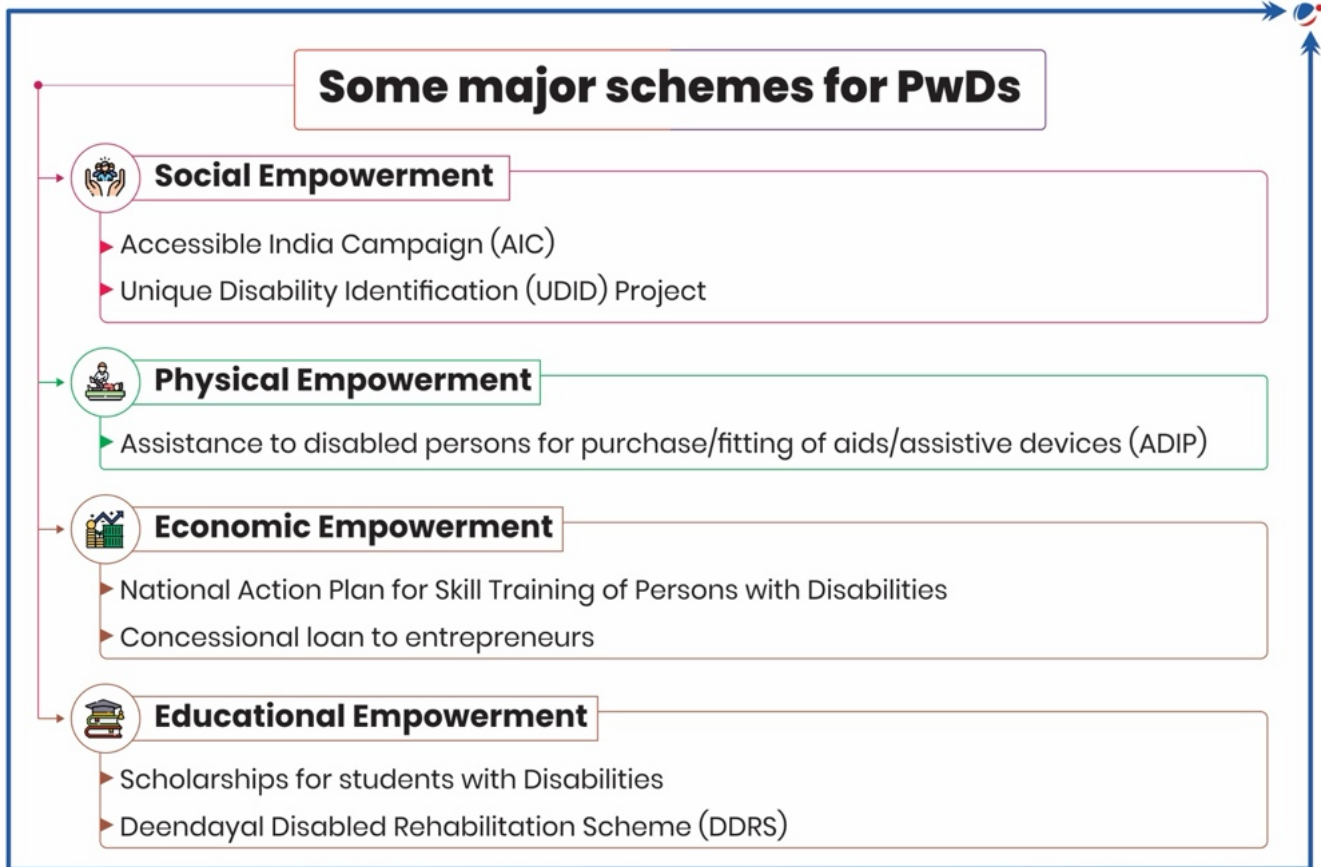
Key Provisions of the Act

- **Definition of PwD:** A person with **long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment** which, in interaction with barriers, **hinders their full and effective participation** in society equally with others.
- **Disabilities recognized:** Recognises **21** types of disabilities including **acid attack victims, intellectual disability, mental illness**, etc.
- **Enumerates right of PwDs**
 - Governments are responsible for ensuring PwDs enjoy the **right to equality, life with dignity and respect**.
 - **Protection from abuse**, cruelty, inhuman treatment, violence and exploitation, etc.
 - **Other rights** include the right to **home and family, reproductive right, accessibility in voting**, the right to **own or inherit property**.
- **Social security:** Mandates government programs to ensure an adequate standard of living, enabling independent or community living for PwDs.



Reasons for sub-optimal implementation of the RPwD Act

- **Inadequate allocation of resources:** The Parliamentary Standing Committee in 2022-23 highlighted between 2016-17 and 2020-21, number of components under the SIPDA increased from 6 to 13, whereas the budgetary allocation increased by less than 9%.
- **Coordination issues:** For example, the non-receipt of Utilisation Certificates from the State Governments has remained a recurring problem, which has resulted in non-release of funds for initiatives for PwDs by the Centre.
- **Rehabilitation services:** 69% of the PwDs reside in rural areas where accessibility, availability, and utilization of rehabilitation services is inadequate.
- **Lack of data and research:** There is a lack of updated reliable and disaggregated data.



Way Forward

- **Handholding to states:** Union ministry should guide state agencies with expert advice, targets, and resources.
- **Enhancing Collaboration:** Foster partnerships across government, civil society, disability rights groups, and private sector.
- **Improve accessibility:** Implement accessibility criteria in procurement laws for physical, digital, and transport infrastructure.
- **Impact assessment:** Establish data systems to monitor the RPwD Act and support research.
- **Social audit:** Section 48 of the Act requires the appropriate **government to undertake a social audit** of all general schemes and programmes involving PwDs.

4. EDUCATION

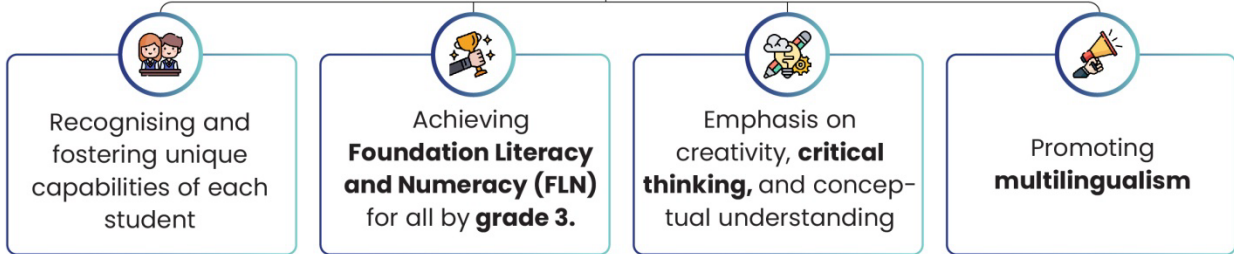
4.1. NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 AT A GLANCE

National Education Policy 2020

NEP 2020 was launched to replace the NEP, 1986 (modified in 1992) with an aim of transforming India into a vibrant society and global knowledge superpower, in line with SDG goal 4.

- **Foundation pillars:** Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability.

Key principles of the NEP, 2020

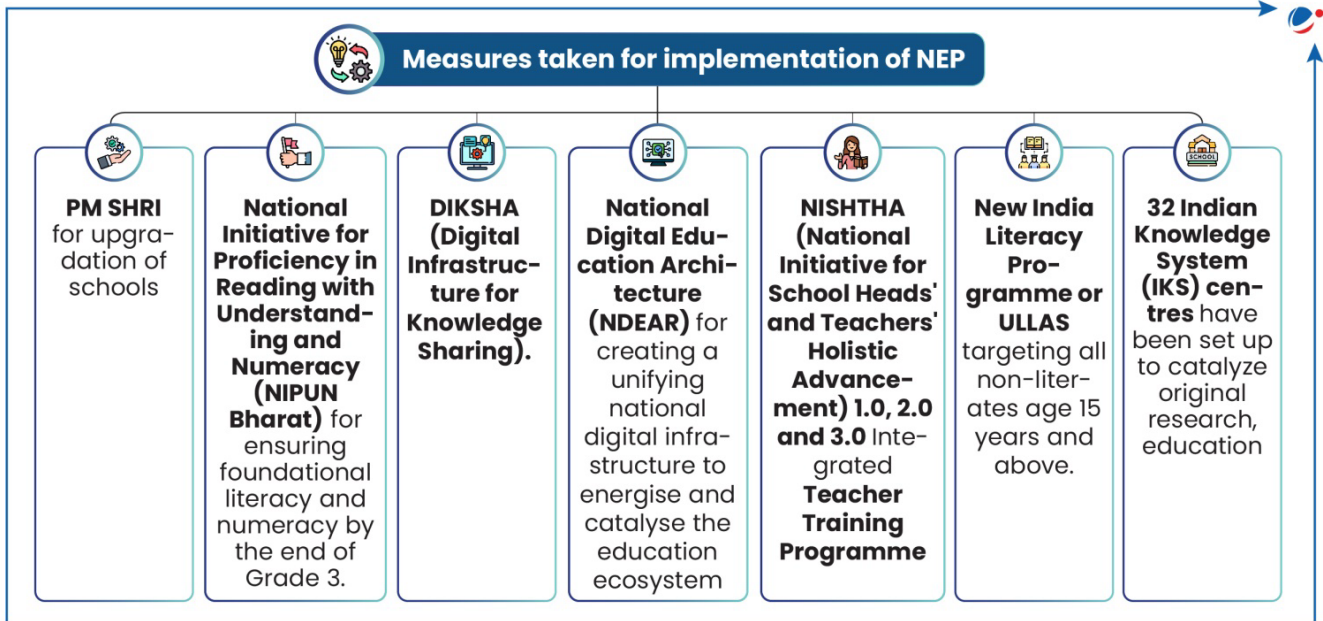


Objectives of the NEP

<p>Increase the public investment in education to 6% of GDP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total expenditure on education as percentage of GDP has shown increasing trend and is 4.64% (2020-21) 	<p>Increase the GER to 100% in preschool to secondary level by 2030.</p>	<p>Increase GER in Higher Education [26.3% (2018)], including vocational education, to 50% by 2035.</p>
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Key Features

<p>New Curricular and Pedagogical Structure (5+3+3+4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foundation Stage (5): 3 years (Anganwadi/ pre-school/Balvatika) (Ages 3-6) + 2 years (Class 1 & 2) (Ages 6-8) ▪ Preparatory Stage (3): 3 Years (Class 3 to 5) (Age 8-11) ▪ Middle Stage (3): 3 Years (Class 6 to 8) (Age 11-14) ▪ Secondary Stage (4): 4 Years (Class 9 to 12) (Age 14-18) 	<p>Ensuring Universal Access at All Levels of schooling from pre-primary school to Grade 12.</p>	<p>A new National Assessment Centre, PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development).</p>	<p>A separate Gender Inclusion fund and Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups.</p>	<p>Experimental learning: Play, discovery, and activity-based and interactive classroom learning.</p>
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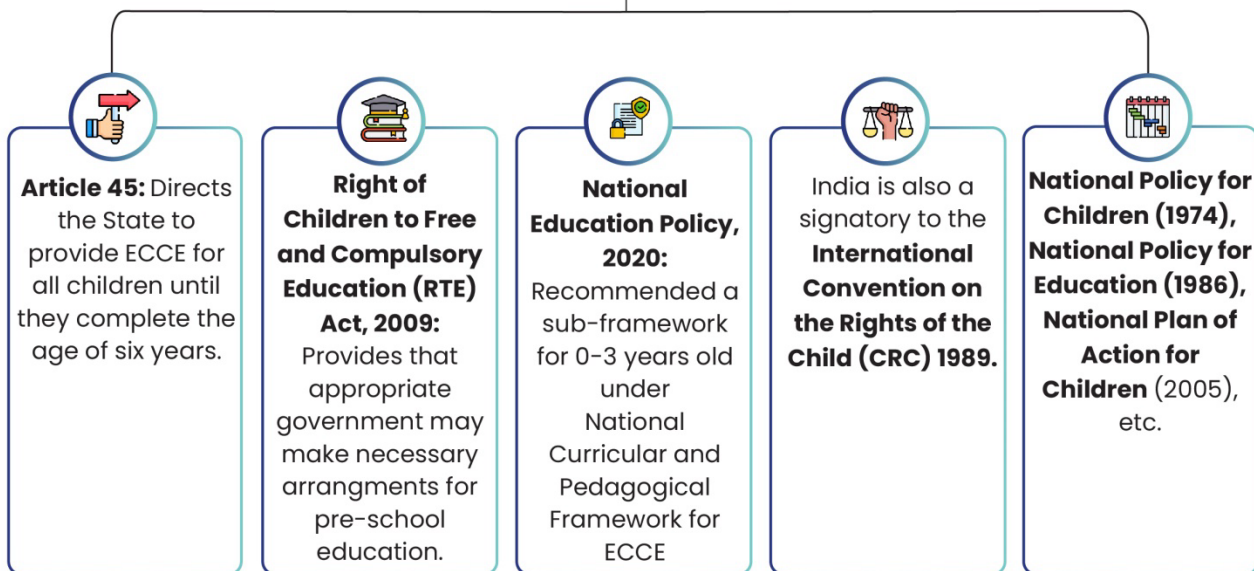
4.2. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION AT A GLANCE

Early Childhood Care and Education

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in the Indian context is generally defined as the care and education of children from **birth to eight years**.

Components of ECCE		
Early stimulation programmes through crèches/homes stimulation for 0-3 year olds	Early childhood education (ECE) programmes for 3-6 year olds (as seen in anganwadis, balwadis, nurseries, preschools, kindergartens, preparatory schools, etc.)	Early Primary Education Programmes as part of schooling for 6-8 year olds

Legal and Policy Framework for ECCE



Schemes for ECCE			
Integrated Child Development Services	Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0:	Palna (PROVISION OF ANGANWADI CUM CRECHES) and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) Schemes under Mission Shakti.	Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi launched in 2023.

MAINS 365 – SOCIAL ISSUES

Global Initiatives

<p>Global Partnership Strategy (GPS) for Early Childhood established by UNESCO.</p>	<p>Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 and Education for All (EFA) 1990 which has postulated ECCE as the very first goal to be achieved for Education For All.</p>	<p>SDG4 (Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All) - 2030 agenda marked the first global commitment to ECCE beyond the education community.</p>
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Challenges of ECCE

- Inadequate **funding** (In 2020–21 only 0.1% of GDP).
- ECCE centres lack age, developmentally appropriate equipment and play materials.
- Issues with teachers qualifications, appointment, remuneration
- Unclear admission process for children in ECCE centres.
- Lack of clear monitoring and supervision mechanism
- **Overburdened** India’s childcare support system(1 worker for every 22 children under Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0)
- Inadequate Convergence/Coordination between different ministries and institutions

Way Forward

- Expansion and strengthening of ECCE facilities to all districts and locations
- **Registration and accreditation** of centres, to ensure quality outcomes.
- Conduct action research to create novel and successful models.
- Recognise ECCE as a **statutory obligation** of MoWCD
- Reorient pedagogy to be more child-led than teacher-led
- Mobilize **CSR funds** in expanding quality and coverage of childcare

4.2.1. AADHARSHILA: A NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR ECCE

Why in the News?

Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has released the National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education 2024 titled ‘Aadharshila,’ on the lines of the National Education Policy 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework.

About Adharshila

- **Aadharshila (translated as foundation stone)** is a detailed 48-week curriculum meant for learning in the age-group of three to six-year-olds in anganwadis.
- The curriculum includes a **weekly based play calendar with**
 - **Four weeks of initiation** that include academic activities which help children transition from home to anganwadi centre by engaging them in fun and free play.
 - **Next 36 weeks are spent in exploring, free play, conversation,** creation and appreciation, reflection that involves various activities, including storytelling, singing rhymes, art and craft and so on.
 - ✓ Storytelling themes revolve around conflict resolution, taking responsibility, working with and helping others.
 - **Last eight weeks** are spent in recap and reinforcing learnings of previous weeks with worksheets and observation of kid’s performance.
- It will serve as a **base for States to develop their own culturally appropriate curriculums seen** as a solution to tackle later school challenges of children.



Key features of the policy

- **Based on Panchakosha concept: Physical Development** (Sharirik Vikas), **Development of Life Energy** (Pranik Vikas), **Emotional/Mental Development** (Manasik Vikas), **Intellectual Development** (Bauddhik Vikas), and **Spiritual Development** (Chaitisik Vikas).
- **Teaching Language and Literacy in Early Years:** Focus on developing children’s emergent Mathematical and Literacy Skills like print awareness, drawing, scribbling, etc.
- **Positive Learning Habits (Executive Function and Self-Regulation Skills):** Focus on establishing routines, establish an atmosphere of positive relationship, empowering the child to lead and make independent choices.
- **Play as Learning:** Knowledge acquired through play becomes a lasting part of the child's experience. E.g. puzzles, Story creation, language and math games etc.
- **Others**
 - **Embracing learning diversity** in the Anganwadi Centre is crucial for Anganwadi educators.
 - **Ensuring gender equality from an early age is crucial**, because gender initiation and internalization start early, influencing children’s self-concept, aspirations, and behaviour.
 - **Divyang Inclusion**
 - ✓ The Anganwadi Protocol for Divyang Children was released by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2023, providing for screening, inclusion and referrals of children with disabilities.

4.2.2. NAVCHETANA - NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD STIMULATION

Why in the News?

Recently, Union Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched the “Navchetna- National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation for Children from Birth to Three Years, 2024”.

More on News

- Navchetana aims to help children from birth to 3 years develop holistically, based on the **principles of serve and return, caregivers’ three acts:** love, talk, play, and positive guidance.
- **Special focus** has been given for the screening, inclusion and referrals of **Divyang children**.
- Framework provides a **stepping stone for children for their long term development**, aiming to ensure that **all children start their learning journeys on an equal footing**.

Early Childhood Stimulation (ECS)

- ECS activities involve **intentional efforts to activate the child’s early development**.
- ECS begins from the **biological and sensory growth** of the child right from **their gestation in the mother’s womb**.
- **Need of ECS**
 - At this age baby’s brain is twice as active as an adult’s brain and patterns of thinking and responding are established.
 - At birth only 25% of the eventual brain is formed, while 75% develops in the first 3 years of a child’s life.

Key highlights of the ECS Framework

- **Objective:** To empower caregivers and Anganwadi Workers for holistic early stimulation through responsive caregiving and early learning opportunities for optimal child development.
- **Nurturing Care Framework:** Emphasizes ‘responsive caregiving’ and ‘creating opportunities for early learning.’ Provided by WHO in 2018.
- **Activities for Development:** 36 sets of activities for children aged 0 to 36 months, focusing on cognitive, socio-emotional, language, physical, and creative development.
- **Inclusion of Children with Disabilities:** Includes an age-appropriate screening tool.
- **Counseling Caregivers:** Guides on conducting stimulation activities.

Counselling caregivers

It is observed that children spending excessive time on screens replace interactive play with peers and family members. Children spending **excessive time on screens may have fewer opportunities to engage** in conversations, leading to delayed speech and language development. Overreliance on screens can lead to issues such as impatience, frustration, and reduced attention spans.

Parents may not know that play and interaction are essential to promote the optimal development of their child. They should be empowered to continue early stimulation in home settings. They should be counselled to:

- Get the child’s attention
- Communicate with their child, respond to their child
- Introduce play activities gradually, in a sensitive and responsive manner
- Select activities appropriate for the age and skills of their child
- Help the child with a new task, and praise the child for her efforts



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4.3. SCHOOL EDUCATION AT A GLANCE

School Education

Gross Enrolment Ratio	Dropout rate	Mean years of schooling	Gender Parity Index
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 100.13% (UDISE+) ▪ Secondary: 79.56% (UDISE+) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Primary: 1.45% (UDISE+) ▪ Secondary: 12.62% (UDISE+) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6.7 years. (UNDP's Global Human Development Index Report 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary: 1.02 ▪ Secondary: 1.00

Key issues plaguing School Education in India

- **Poor Learning Outcomes:** About **25%** of **14-18 year-old** rural youth still **cannot read a Standard II level text fluently** in their regional language. (ASER, 2023)
- **Poor pedagogy:** focus on **rote-based learning, one-size-fits-all** teaching model, and **unhealthy competition** affecting students' mental health and **self-esteem**.
- **Single-teacher schools:** Around 1.1 Lakh Single-teacher schools with ~89% in rural areas. (UNESCO 2021)
- **Engagement of teachers in non-teaching tasks:** Only ~19% of a teacher's annual school hours are spent on teaching. (NIEPA report)
- **Shortage of qualified teachers:** Many teachers are themselves **scoring <60-70% in papers of the grades that they teach** (NITI Aayog)
- **Infrastructure deficit:** Inadequate provisions for **fundamental facilities** like drinking water, power, **study materials, etc.**

Way Forward

- **Exchange Programs:** Student and teacher exchange programs to enhance **exposure** to improve **standards** of school education in rural areas.
- **Adoption of schools:** Private schools can adopt schools in remote areas through **CSR Model**.
- **Teacher training:** **First professional degree/ diploma in teacher education** must be offered only in **face-to-face mode** and **distance learning** must only be pursued **for professional development** of teachers. (Justice Verma Committee, 2012)
- **Enhancing accountability:** Transparent and credible **accreditation** mechanism for teacher education as well as schools.
- **Reshaping pedagogy:** **Experiential learning** like arts-integrated education, story-telling-based pedagogy, stakeholder collaboration, etc.
- **Continuous assessment:** Replicate and implement **CBSE's Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) system**, with improvements based on feedback.

MAINS 365 – SOCIAL ISSUES

4.3.1. NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION (NCF-SE)

Why in the News?

Union Ministry of Education recently released NCF-SE, which was prepared by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).



Key Highlights of NCF-SE

- **Curriculum framework:** Curriculum framework: NCF-SE designed it in a 5+3+3+4 (in terms of ages) for schooling in place of the existing 10+2 structure in school education.
- **Board examinations:** Grades 10 and 12 students can take Board exams twice per year, with the best score retained.
- **Pattern of study:** Move to a **semester design** instead of an annual exam.
- **Multilingualism and Indian Languages:** All students are to be proficient in at least three languages, at least two of which are native to India.
- **Flexibility and Choice in the Secondary Stage:** No hard separation between academic and vocational subjects or between science, social science, art, and physical education.
- **Vocational Education:** Proposes engagement in the three different forms of work – work with life forms (agriculture, animal husbandry), work with materials and machines, and work in human services.
- **Rooted in India:** Integrates contributions from ancient to contemporary Indian knowledge into the curriculum.
- **Capacities for Scientific Inquiry:** Emphasizes scientific inquiry alongside fundamental theories.
- **Interdisciplinary Areas of Study:** It has been introduced as a separate subject of study in the Secondary Stage.
- **Environmental Education:** It is given due emphasis across all stages of schooling, culminating in a separate area of study in the Secondary Stage.

Need of NCF-SE

- **Contemporary Framework and National Standard across India:** Enabling harmony and cogency in school education across Indian states while recognising that **school education is the domain of states**.
- **Knowledge-based approach:** Shifts focus from exam-centric learning to fostering a deeper understanding.
- **Improving Quality of Teachers:** Aligns Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) curriculum with NCF to enhance teacher quality.
- **Involving new techniques:** Such as reading and writing on screen-based devices, etc.
- **Holistic growth of Students:** Curriculum for the four stages of schooling is designed based on considerations of child development, conceptual development, and the appropriate modes of inquiry at each age range.

Concerns with NCF-SE

- **Over-centralised curriculum design:** As it is contrary to the **concurrent nature of education in the federal structure** and the role of states in ensuring cultural diversity and equity.
- **Logistical challenges:** Conducting the Board exam twice a year requires a feasibility and logistics check.
 - Also, students might get under stress twice due to the board exam in the same year.
- **Manpower shortage:** Low availability of language teachers, and manpower shortage exists more in government and aided schools.
- **Limitation of Schools:** Many schools might not be in a position to offer the entire range of disciplines in Grades 11 and 12.

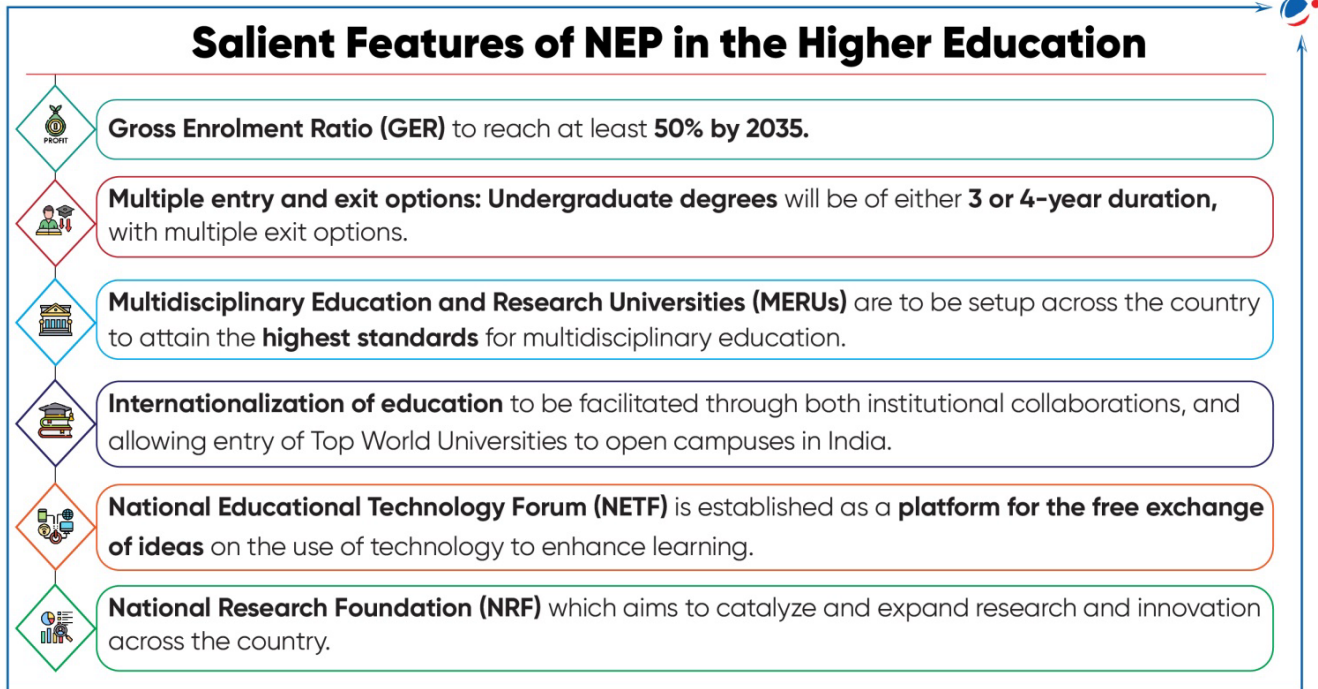
Way Forward

- **Higher Education Revamp:** Align higher education with new frameworks to facilitate smoother transitions from school.
- **End Discriminatory Practices:** Eliminate exclusionary practices in schools that restrict students' subject choices.
- **Improve Student-Teacher Ratio:** The ratio in primary schools improved from 43 in 2010-11 to 26.3 in 2020-21.
- **Increase Public Investment:** Education expenditure for 2020-21 was 4.64% of GDP, still short of the 6% target under NEP 2020.

4.4. HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Why in the News?

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth, and Sports submitted its report on Implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 in Higher Education.



Major problems faced by the higher education system in India

- **Fragmented Ecosystem:** Lack of integration and coordination among education organizations; e.g., 35.8% (AISHE report 2020-21) of colleges offer only one program, limiting access to diverse fields.
- **Rigid Disciplines:** Specialization and streaming push students into narrow study areas.
- **Reduced Research Focus:** Limited scope and funding for futuristic research compared to other countries.
- **Limited Autonomy:** Institutions face strict regulations on curriculum, research, admissions, and staff appointments.
- **Regional Language Emphasis:** English-centric curriculum affects students with regional language schooling backgrounds.

Key Recommendations of the Committee

- **Personalized Degree Programs:** Encourage personalized, interdisciplinary degrees tailored to students' career needs.
- **Industry-Institution Connect:** Foster collaboration between industry and institutions to drive innovation, experimentation, and practical solutions.
- **Creative Potential Development:** Prioritize research and innovation with financial support, moving away from rote learning to enhance cognitive skills and foster creativity.
- **Regional Languages:** Provide curriculum and digital resources in regional languages to improve accessibility and learning outcomes.
- **Access for Marginalized Communities:** Increase education access through awareness campaigns, improved infrastructure, and specialized teacher training.
- **Multi-Entry and Multiple Exit (MEME):** Develop a clear MEME framework with eligibility criteria and credit transfer mechanisms for various student exit points.

4.5. ACCREDITATION SYSTEM FOR HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES (HEIS)

Why in the News?

Recently, Union Ministry of Education has accepted the proposed reforms in the accreditation system of HEIs as recommended by **Dr. K Radhakrishnan Committee**.

About India's accreditation of HEIs

- Accreditation is **assessment of the quality of education**.
- **University Grants Commission (UGC)** accords recognition to the HEIs under the provisions of the 'UGC Act 1956'

Significance of Accreditation



Challenges in India's accreditation system

- **Centralized system:** Indian regulation and accreditation are centralised, with limited outreach in federal states.
- **Low participation:** For example, there are 1,113 universities across the country out of which only 418 universities are accredited by NAAC.
- **Duplication and overlap:** Multiple agencies within the ambit of Union Government (and some States, lately) have been **mandated for periodic approvals, assessment, accreditation, and ranking of HEIs**.
- **Challenging procedure:** Process for collection of the information sought by the accrediting agencies (that too at different periodicity) are cumbersome and tiresome.
- **Manual/hybrid systems:** Increased subjectivity and inconsistency among agencies' assessments.
- **Alleged corruption:** Recent allegations of vested interests and malpractices in the NAAC accreditation system have been raised.

Key recommendations for improving India's accreditation system of HEIs

- **Composite Assessment System (CAS):** Amalgamate Programme - Accreditation and Institutional - Accreditation.
- **Binary Accreditation:** Either accredited or not accredited.
- **Maturity-Based Graded Accreditation:** Level 1 to Level 5 to encourage HEIs to evolve in-depth or in-breadth in disciplines.
- **One Nation One Data Platform:** To ensure integrity and transparency in handing institutional data.
- **"Stakeholder validation":** To effectively integrate stakeholders as part of the accreditation and ranking process.
- **Other proposals:** Enable choice based ranking system for diverse users, bring down periodicity of re-accreditation, etc.

Accreditation of school

- In India, there is **no mandate from the government on regular school evaluations**.
- **NEP 2020** visualizes an effective **quality self-regulation or accreditation system for all stages of education** including pre-school education.
 - It also recommends a **separate School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework** be developed by State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs).
- **National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET)** is offering an accreditation programme called ‘**Accreditation standard for Quality School Governance**’.
 - NABET is the **constituent Board of the Quality Council of India (QCI)**.
 - **The standard has three basic sections:**
 - ✓ School Governance
 - ✓ Educational and Support Processes
 - ✓ Performance Measurement & Improvement

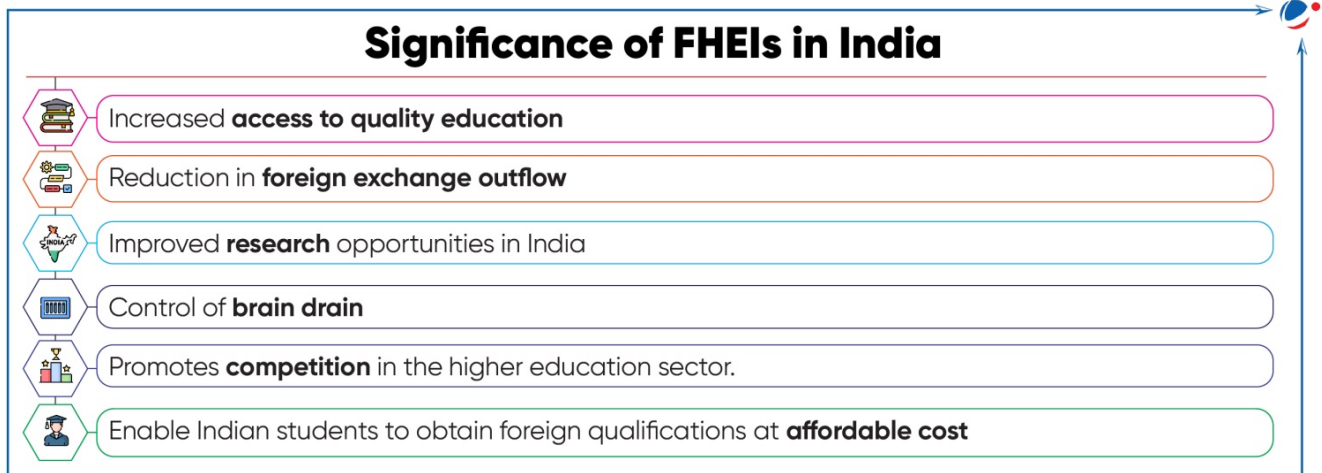
4.6. REGULATION OF FHEIS IN INDIA

Why in the News?

University Grants Commission has notified the **UGC (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions (FHEIs) in India) Regulations, 2023**.

More on News

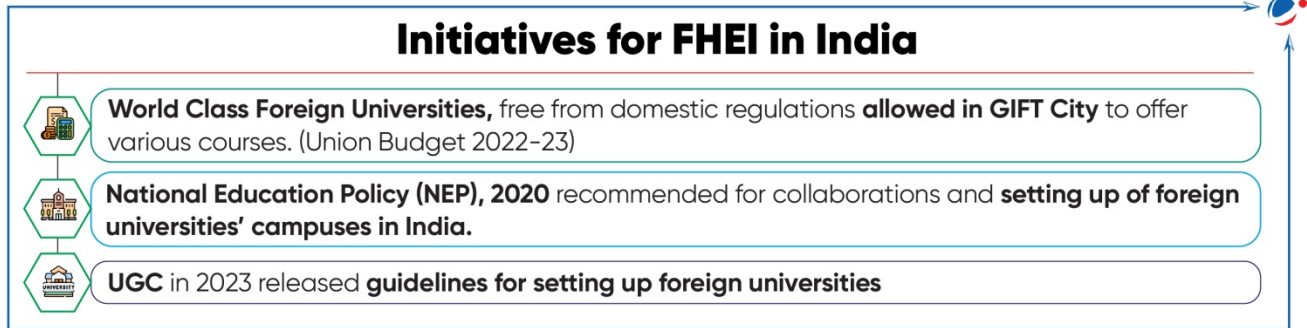
- **FHEI** means a **higher education institution** that is established/incorporated or recognized in a **foreign country** and **offers academic/research programs** at the **undergraduate and/or higher levels**.
- **University Grants Commission (UGC)**'s regulation aims to **facilitate the entry of FHEIs into India**, in line with the recommendations of **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**.



Key highlights of Regulations

- **Approval:** FHEIs require UGC's approval before establishment of Indian campuses, offer any programme, and discontinue any course or programme.
 - Not allowed to offer Programme which is contrary to the standards of higher education in India.
- **Eligibility:** FHEIs **ranked within top 500 in global rankings** either in overall category or in subject-wise category or **possessing outstanding expertise** in a particular area.
- **Qualifications:** Qualifications awarded and quality of education in Indian campuses shall be equivalent to those awarded in their home jurisdiction.
 - FHEIs **cannot offer programmes in online** or in open and distance learning modes.

- **Autonomy:** Allowed to decide **admission process and criteria**, recruit faculty and staff, and decide a transparent and reasonable fee structure.
- **Restrictions:** FHEIs' Operation shall not be contrary to sovereignty and integrity of India, security of State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency, or morality.
 - For receiving donations from foreign source, FHEIs require **prior permission of the Union Government**.



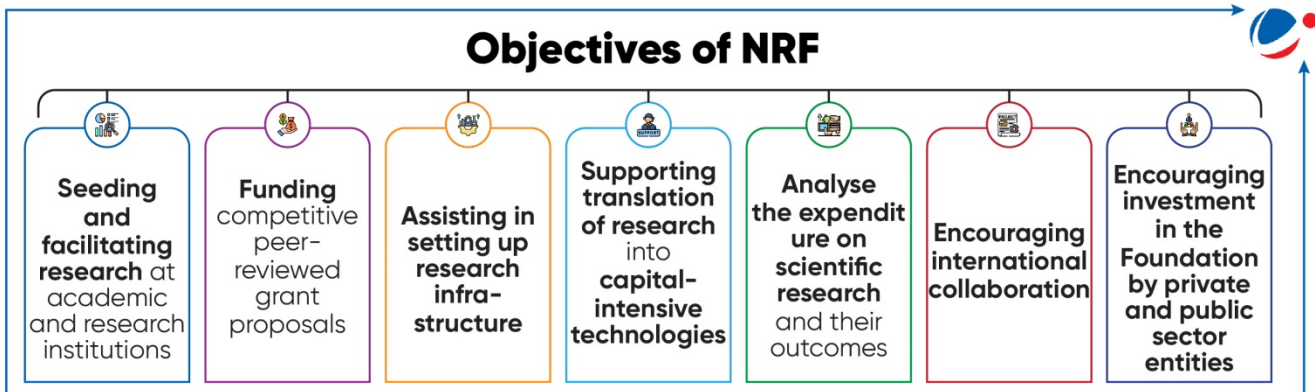
4.7. ANUSANDHAN NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION (NRF) ACT, 2023

Why in the News?

Parliament enacted the **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) Act, 2023** to establish Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF).

Key highlights of the Act

- **Establish the Anusandhan NRF:** To provide strategic direction for research, innovation and entrepreneurship in the fields of natural sciences, and scientific and technological interfaces of humanities and social sciences.
 - Promote, monitor, and provide support as required for such research.
- **A Governing Board to provide strategic direction** to the Foundation and monitors the implementation of the objectives of the Foundation.
- **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** will be the administrative Department of NRF.
- **Funds for NRF**
 - **Foundation will be financed through** grants and loans from the central government, donations, etc.
 - **The Governing Board shall constitute Innovation Fund** for funding outstanding creativity in the areas supported by the Foundation, **Science and Engineering Research Fund** for the continuation of projects initiated under the 2008 Act
- **Repeals Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)** and subsumes it into ANRF.
- **Anusandhan NRF is modelled on the US National Science Foundation (NSF).**





What is the significance of NRF?

- **Increase Funding:** Boost collaboration and funding for scientific R&D from both government and private sources.
- **Address Disparity:** Research institutes like IITs and IISc get substantial funding, but the NRF proposed in NEP 2020 aims to build research capacity across all academic centers.
- **Build Research Capacity:** Utilize outstanding serving and retired researchers to mentor and develop research at state universities and colleges.
- **Support Multidisciplinary Projects:** NRF will facilitate collaboration on key areas like sustainable infrastructure and clean energy.
- **Research in Social Sciences:** Encourage research in humanities, social sciences, and arts to foster creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills.

Concerns associated with the Act

- **Structural voids unfilled:** The NRF Act focuses on **project funding rather than providing comprehensive research block funding to universities** and research institutions. The ongoing challenge of sustaining teacher recruitment for research pursuits remains unresolved.
- **Lack of stakeholder collaboration:** It **lacks clarity on involving economic and social ministries and Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in decision-making** in NRF decisions.
- **Challenge to cooperative Federalism:** Act **does not incorporate the perspectives of state councils of higher education** and research in the decision-making body.

Way Forward

- **Prioritising research:** NRF should **give priority to projects directed towards higher education institutions, civil society organisations**, industrial R&D and projects catering to economic, social and ecological justice.
- **Ensure transparency:** Modalities of seeding and promoting research by providing funds to less-endowed institutions and monitoring outcomes should be transparent.
- **Prioritising Inclusivity:** Ensure that basic research and small-scale research proposals are not brushed aside.
- **Wider Consultation:** Entail **creating a system to openly share proposal abstracts and engage the scientific community** and research users for feedback.
- **Address Loopholes:** **Address the structural issues** like a low number of researchers and focus on block funding to increase the effectiveness of research in the country.

Case Study: How NSF has transformed Science and Technology in the USA?

- **Social:** NSF invests in **education and training programs**, ensuring the generation of ideas to solve pressing global challenges in science and engineering.
- **Scientific development:** NSF invests in **supercomputers, ground-based telescopes, research stations in the Arctic and Antarctic**, and state-of-the-art tools to sustain the nation's scientific enterprise.
- **Collaboration:** NSF supports **research partnerships between colleges, universities, industry, non-profits, government and other organizations** within the US and across the globe.
- **Communication:** NSF played an important role in supporting research relevant to the **development of the non-fibre components and devices needed in a fibre-optic communication system**.

4.8. EDUCATION IN REGIONAL LANGUAGES

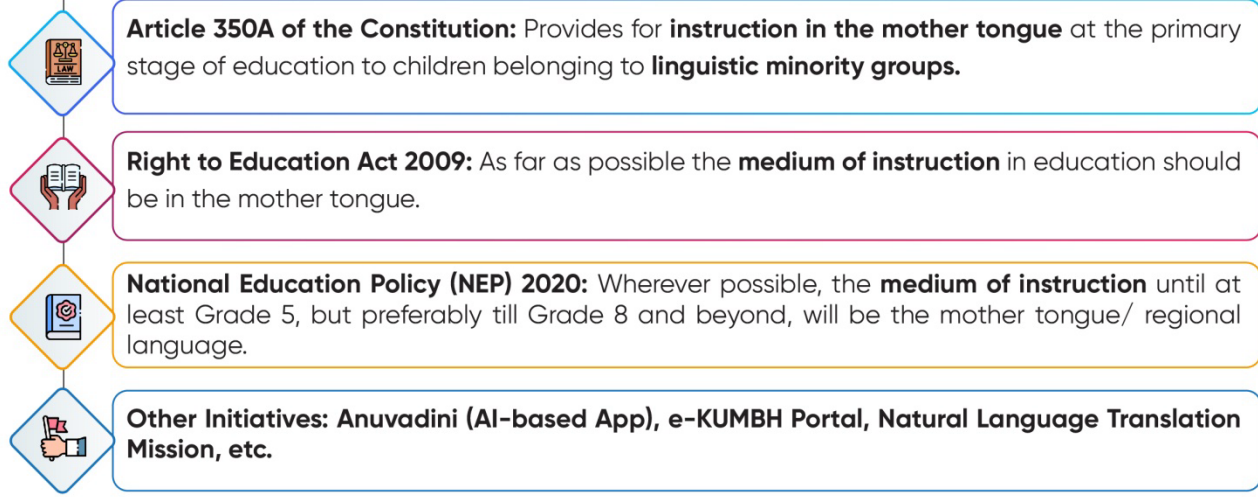
Why in the News?

Union Ministry of Education directed schools and higher education regulators to make study material available digitally in Indian languages included in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.

Significance of Promoting Education in Regional Languages

- **Enhanced learning and cognitive development:** Students can grasp concepts more easily, get space to think innovatively and enhanced ability to express themselves.
- **Preservation of culture and identity:** Local languages tend to easily connect people with their roots and heritage.
- **Addressing Socio-Economic Disparities:** By providing equitable educational opportunities to students across different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- **Community Participation:** Parents and community members like NGOs are more likely to engage with schools when the language of instruction aligns with their linguistic preferences.

Policy and Legal Framework for Education in Regional Languages



Challenges related to education in regional languages

- **Teacher Training and Proficiency:** High Initial Cost for developing new learning material and trained teachers.
- **Transition to English-Medium Higher Education:** Proficiency in English is often a requirement for many advanced courses and professional opportunities.
- **Globalization and job market demands:** Dilemma between the promotion of regional languages and the practicalities of preparing students for international opportunities.
- **Technological barriers:** Lack of digital resources and technology in regional languages can be a hindrance to effective learning.
- **Parental aspirations:** Parents often aspire for their children to be proficient in English, seeing it as a pathway to better career opportunities.
- **Administrative and Policy Implementation:** Coordinating efforts across different states and regions to ensure uniformity can be a logistical challenge.

Way Forward

- **Teacher training programs:** Implement **comprehensive teacher training programs** to enhance proficiency in regional languages and subject matter expertise.
- **Bridge programs for English Transition:** To facilitate transition from regional language education to English-medium higher education.
- **Technology integration:** This includes **e-books, online courses, and educational apps** that make learning more interactive and accessible.
- **Incentives for Regional Language Education:** Such as **scholarships, awards, and recognition.**
- **Partnerships with NGOs and the Private Sector:** To bring in **additional resources, expertise, and innovative solutions.**
- **International Collaboration:** To share **best practices and experiences** in implementing regional language education such as **Philippines’s multilingual education Policy.**



Lakshya Prelims & Mains Integrated Mentoring Program 2025

(A 15 Months Strategic Revision, Practice, and Mentoring Program for UPSC Prelims and Mains Examination 2025)

VisionIAS introduces the Lakshya Prelims & Mains Integrated Mentoring Programme 2025, offering unified guidance for UPSC aspirants across both stages, ensuring comprehensive support and strategic preparation for success

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- Focus on Current Affairs & CSAT preparation through rigorous practice
- Access to Lakshya Prelims Practice Tests (LPPT) and Lakshya Mains Practice Test (LMPT)
- Sandhan Personalised Test Series with an extensive collection of 15000+ questions
- Development of Advanced answer writing skills
- Subject-wise strategy documents and smart material for both Prelims and Mains
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Date	Duration	Medium	Mode
23 rd JULY	15 Months	English & Hindi	Offline & Online

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enquiry@visionias.in

5. HEALTH

5.1. HEALTHCARE AT A GLANCE

Healthcare

According to WHO, Health is a **state of complete physical, mental and social well-being** and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.



India's Health care system

Structure:

- **Primary:** Primary Health Centres (PHCs), and Sub-Health Centres (SHCs)
- **Secondary:** Community Health Centres (CHCs), Sub-District Hospitals
- **Tertiary:** District Hospitals and Medical College Hospitals

- **Best practices:** Mohalla Clinics Model (Delhi), Kerala and Tamil Nadu Insurance Model, ASHA
- **Global best practices for PHCs:** Family clinics in Brazil and polyclinics and offices in Cuba.



India's Health status

- **Government Health Expenditure:** ~1.35% of GDP (41.41% of Total Health Expenditure) (2019-20)
- **Out-of-pocket expenses (OOPE):** 47.1% of the total health expenditure (2019-20)
- **Health insurance coverage:** 41% of households with any usual member covered under a health insurance. (NFHS-5)
- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR):** 2.0 (NFHS-5)
- **Under-five mortality rate (U5MR):** 41.9 (NFHS-5)
- **Infant mortality rate (IMR):** 35.2 (NFHS-5)
- **Neonatal mortality rate (NMR):** 24.9 (NFHS-5)
- **Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR):** 97 per 1 Lakh Live births 2018-20 (Economic Survey 2022-23)
- **Institutional birth:** 88.6% (NFHS-5)
- **Low doctor to patient ratio:** 1:834 (including both Allopathic and AYUSH doctors) (1:1000 prescribed by the WHO)
- **Geographical inequality:** Around 2/3rd population in rural areas, yet 73% of the public hospital beds in urban areas.

5.2. UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

Why in the News?

Recently, the **Tracking Universal Health Coverage: 2023 Global Monitoring report** was jointly released by the **World Health Organization** and **World Bank**.

Universal Health Coverage and its importance

- **UHC** means that **all people have access to a full range of quality health services without financial hardship**.

- It covers the **full continuum of essential health services**, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care.

Key dimensions of UHC



Access to health services: Everyone who needs services should get them, not only those who can pay for them



Financial Risk Protection: People should not fall into debt, paying for treatment and care



Quality of services: Services should be adequate and effective

Challenges in achieving UHC: Low healthcare expenditure, lack of financial protection, low health insurance protection, high out-of-pocket expenditure, inequitable access, poor health awareness, etc.

Initiatives for Universal Health Coverage



Ayushman Bharat Yojana: Holistic health interventions at all levels.



Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission: Equitable access via technology.



National Health Policy 2017: Affordable, quality healthcare for all



Intensified Mission Indradhanush: Immunization for zero-dose children and pregnant women

Way Forward

- **Recommendations from report**
 - Adopting a **primary healthcare approach**.
 - **Expansion of essential services**, especially for Non-Communicable Diseases.
 - Removing financial barriers e.g., issues of **indirect costs** and **co-payments** in health care.
 - Strong commitments to **International Health Regulations** in acute public health risk.
- **Increase public spending:** Raise government spending to 5.2% of GDP, aligning with Lower- and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC) averages.
- **Address Structural Issues:** Engage private sector and civil society, expand medical seats, and ensure medical supplies and workforce.
- **“Health” in all policies approach:** For example, ensuring mid-day meals to avoid malnutrition.
- **Centre-State Coordination:** Adopt collaborative mechanisms for flexible policymaking and differential financing to meet diverse state needs.

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

Why in the News?

Recently, the **Comptroller and Auditor General** of India (CAG) **presented a report** on the performance AB-PMJAY.

AB-PMJAY: Quick Facts

Type	Purpose	Background	2 Components
Centrally Sponsored Scheme (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare)	To achieve the vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC)	Recommended by the National Health Policy 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)

Key issues highlighted in the report

- **Inadequate Registration:** Only 73% (7.87 crore) of the targeted 10.74 crore households were registered; the ministry has increased the beneficiary target to 12 crore families.
- **Irregularities in Identification:** Less than 30% (2.08 crore) of beneficiaries were identified from the outdated SECC-2011 database, with errors like invalid names, duplicate PMJAY IDs, etc.
- **Empanelled Health Care Providers (EHCPs):** Many EHCPs failed to meet minimum criteria and quality standards, and beneficiaries faced treatment charges.
- **Financial Irregularities:** States often lacked separate escrow accounts for PMJAY, and expenditure tracking via PFMS was incomplete.
- **Claim Management:** Issues included inadequate validation, delayed payments, and concentration of payments in six states.
- **Monitoring and Grievance Redressal:** Many states lacked Whistle Blower Policies and Anti-Fraud Cells; less than 10% of grievances were addressed within 15 days.

Key Recommendations

- **Registration:** Implement mechanisms to ensure timely coverage of beneficiaries and establish an IEC cell to enhance scheme reach.
- **Weed out ineligible beneficiaries:** Put a suitable mechanism for the **identification and validation of beneficiaries' data** to increase the accuracy and reliability of the data.
- **Hospital Empanelment and Management:** Ensure **mandatory physical verification** for the empanelment of hospitals to **prevent** the empanelment of a **de-empanelled hospital**.
 - Invest in public hospitals to reduce out-of-pocket payments.
- **Financial Management:**
 - Ensure **SHAs** have **designated escrow accounts** for PMJAY to receive their upfront share without delay.
 - Have a **mechanism to map and identify PMJAY beneficiaries** to avoid overlap of PMJAY and state-specific
- **Claims Management:** Ensure timely and scrutinized claim payments, and use claim funds to enhance hospital infrastructure and services.
- **Monitoring and Grievance Redressal:** Ensure the formation of **District Implementing Units** in every District.

5.4. DIGITAL HEALTH

Why in the News?

World Health Organization (WHO) and the G20 India presidency announced a new Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH)

More on News

- **GIDH aims to**
 - **Align:** Efforts with the Global Strategy on Digital Health 2020–2025 for universal health improvement.
 - **Support:** Standards-based, interoperable systems.

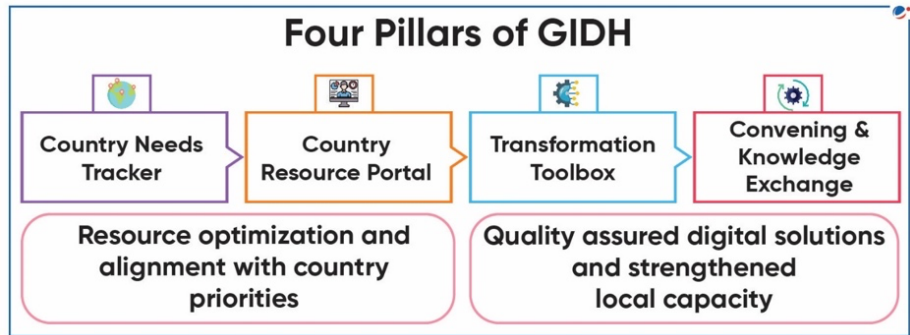
- **Facilitate:** Use of digital tools for health transformation.
- GIDH will address challenges such as duplication of efforts and “products-focused” digital health transformation through a focus on four foundational pillars

Digital Health

- Digital health is the **use of digital technologies for healthcare purposes.**

Significance

- **Early Diagnosis:** Regular monitoring aids in early detection of disease progression.
- **Cost Reduction:** Lowers healthcare expenses for patients and providers.
- **Improved Outcomes:** Personalised treatment plans enhance patient health.
- **Real-Time Monitoring:** Logs significant health elements like medication use.
- **Efficiency:** Reduces administrative workload for healthcare professionals.
- **Accessibility:** Initiatives like telemedicine enhance healthcare access



Government Initiatives to promote Digital Health

- Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM):** Integrated digital health infrastructure
- Covid Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) system:** Digital COVID vaccine distribution
- eSanjeevani:** National telemedicine service
- Poshan Didi:** Chatbot-based nutrition counseling
- Nikshay 2.0 portal:** Community support for TB patients
- Telemental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele-MANAS):** Free telemental health services

Concerns Associated with Digital Health

- **Data Consent Concerns:** Patients are reluctant to share their data and have concerns about the privacy, protection and security of their health data.
- **Data Processing:** Managing vast data from hospitals and clinics is challenging for personalized patient care.

- **Accountability:** Identifying liability in case of device failure is difficult. Network failures can cause device errors, posing threats to patient safety beyond hospital settings.
- **Lack of Infrastructure:** Inadequate IT support, poor digital connectivity in rural areas, and lack of trained staff hinder digital health accessibility nationwide.
- **Digital Illiteracy:** Patients' inability to use technology affects digital health success.
- **Quality of Care:** Concerns about the accuracy of diagnoses and treatments in telehealth without physical exams reduce trust in digital health services.

Way ahead

- **World Bank, in its 'Digital in Health – Unlocking Value for Everyone' report, recommended**
 - **Prioritize:** Digital health interventions to **solve health challenges and for reaching the underserved.**
 - **Connect:** Global and regional collaboration, leadership and partnership within and across sectors, etc. **to deliver better and seamless health services.**
 - **Scale:** Digital skills and literacy, Public-private partnerships for funding, etc., **to ensure equitable access to health care for everyone.**
- **Prioritising Governance:** Invest in digital health governance and foundational aspects rather than just discrete interventions such as applications, medical devices, etc.
- **Data protection:** Increase data-sharing willingness by ensuring consent, consumer data access, ethical oversight, and data deletion capabilities.
- **Training and awareness:** Upskill health professionals and the public through awareness initiatives.
- **Use of AI:** Leverage AI to process healthcare data for targeted, personalized services.

■ Emphasis on conceptual clarity to train the aspirants for developing an understanding to solve ethics case study from basic to advance level

■ Case studies covers all the exclusive topics from contemporary and current issues as well as previous Year UPSC Paper Case studies

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5.5. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AT A GLANCE

Sexual and Reproductive Health

SRH can be defined as a **person's right to a healthy body, autonomy, education and healthcare to freely decide** who to have sex with and how to avoid sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or unintended pregnancy including the spacing and timing of children. These are **human rights - universal, indivisible, and undeniable**.

 Importance of SRH	 Challenges faced by people in SRH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides vital information about sexualities, gender identities, and expression. ▪ Reduces child marriage, teenage pregnancies, and STIs like HIV, AIDS etc. ▪ Facilitates right to make autonomous decisions about one's own body and reproductive functions ▪ Attaining SDGs like gender equality, women wellbeing, improve maternal health etc. ▪ Stabilizes population, achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural norms and ideological opposition to Family Planning and abortion ▪ Chronic underfunding of reproductive health-care in areas like safe abortion and family planning. ▪ Lack of sex education due to absence of a comfortable environment at home/school. ▪ Gender-based violence and its debilitating impact on SRH outcomes.

 India's Initiatives taken to improve SRH	 Global level initiatives for SRH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Amendment Act, 2021 increases limit for termination of pregnancy up to 24 weeks. ▪ Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 seeks to prohibit commercial surrogacy. ▪ Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karykram, 2014 to improve knowledge and behaviour, in relation to SRH. ▪ Mission Parivar Vikas for increasing the access to contraceptives in 146 high fertility districts with TFR of 3 and above ▪ Draft Menstrual Hygiene Policy 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nairobi Summit, 2019 (aka ICPD+25), India supports its commitment to integrate SRH into UHC at primary healthcare level, equalising access, and improving quality. ▪ Beijing Platform for Action, 1995 states that human rights of women include their right to have control over SRH, free of discrimination and violence.



Ways to improve SRH

- **Menstrual Health Education:** Start conversations in schools and communities, incorporating menstrual health and hygiene into reproductive health sessions.
- **Budgetary Support:** For achieving health outcomes, universal health coverage, and cost-effectiveness.
- **Supportive Policies:** Promote laws, policies, and practices that support women's SRHR.
- **Access to Services:** Improve **access to contraceptives** and STI testing through physical and technological infrastructure.
- **Gender-Neutral Care:** Provide care and counseling for all victims of violence affecting SRH, including menstrual issues, fertility, and sexual dysfunction.

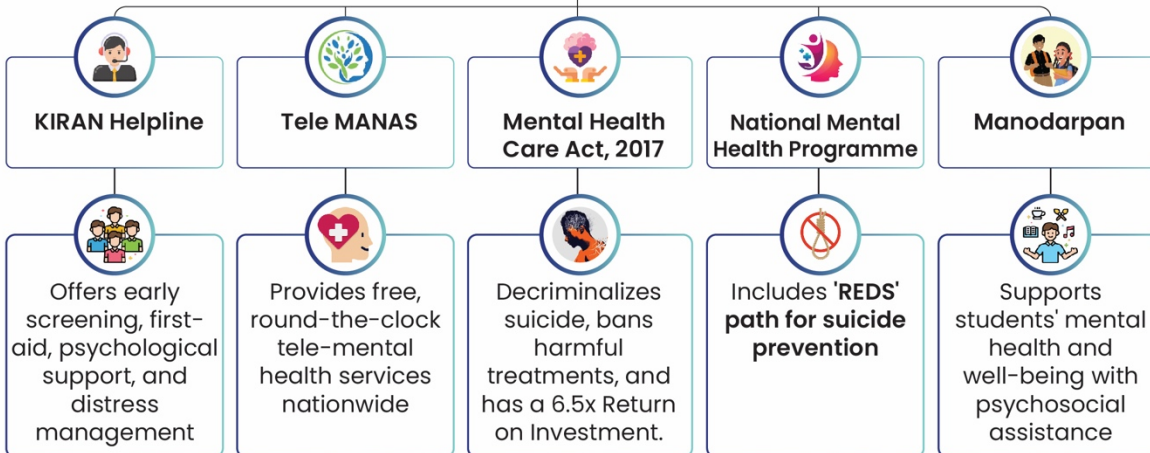
5.6. MENTAL HEALTHCARE AT A GLANCE

Mental Healthcare

- **Mental health** is a state of **well-being**, where an **individual realises their capabilities**, can cope with the normal stressors of life, work productively, and is **able to contribute to their community**.
- Mental illnesses or mental health disorders refer to a **wide range of mental health conditions like depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders and addictive behaviors**.

Current status of mental illness in India			
10.6% of adults in India suffer from mental disorders	Treatment gap for mental disorders ranged between 70 to 92% for different disorders. (National Mental Health Survey 2015-16).	Individuals aged 25-44 years are the most affected by mental illnesses	One in every eight people (or 970 million people globally) were living with a mental disorder. (WHO)

Key initiatives to deal with the issue of Mental illness



Challenges in tackling mental illness	Way ahead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenges faced by patients: Social stigma, higher cost, and long duration of treatment. ▪ Inadequate doctors: Only 0.75 psychologists per lakh population. ▪ Regional disparity: Inadequate resources in rural and remote areas. ▪ Rehabilitation issues: Inadequate community-based rehabilitation facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Careful mapping and research: Essential for producing quality data and understanding the scope of the problem. ▪ Awareness programme: Aims to counter social stigma and enhance understanding of mental illness. ▪ Budget allocation: Increase and effectively utilize financial resources for mental health. ▪ Affordability: Regulate insurance norms and counseling costs to make mental health services more accessible. ▪ Intersectoral coordination: Improve collaboration between mental health and social welfare departments. ▪ Community care: Shift from institutional care to community-based approaches.

5.7. PALLIATIVE CARE

Why in the News?

Kerala have received praise from the World Health Organization (WHO) for their exemplary palliative care model.

About Palliative care

- Palliative care is an interdisciplinary approach that aims at **improving the quality of life** of both **terminally ill patients and their caregivers**.
- It provides **physical, emotional, psychosocial, spiritual and rehabilitative interventions**.
 - Sometime Palliative care is equated with **hospice care** which has a narrower connotation as it aims to **help people, who are dying, have peace, comfort and dignity**.
- **According to the WHO, 56.8 million people need palliative care** which would be doubled by 2060.
 - In India, **only 1-2% of people in need of palliative care are able to access it**.

Government Initiative

- **National Programme for Palliative Care (NPPC)** was announced in 2012 under the **Mission flexipool of National Health Mission**.
 - **Provides for grant in aid** to the **States/UTs** from the Centre for establishing Palliative care services at the **district level** and **Sate palliative care cell**.



Kerala Model of Palliative Care

- **Government Support:** Kerala introduced a comprehensive Palliative Care Policy in 2008, making it the first state in India to do so.
- **Community-Based Approach:** Integrates community involvement in providing care.
- **Integration:** Palliative care is integrated into primary healthcare.
- **Home based:** Formation of the Neighbourhood Networks in Palliative Care (NNPCs), providing home-based palliative care
- **Accessibility:** Training mid-level professionals has facilitated access to home-based palliative care.
- **Volunteerism:** Volunteerism has played a significant role, adapting to local needs.

Challenges in providing quality Palliative care

- **Policy gaps:** For example, under NPPC the palliative care service delivery starts **only from the district hospital**.
- **Lack of a dedicated budget:** This prevented the effective implementation of the **NPPC**.
- **Human and physical resources:** Inadequate number of **trained workforces**, and limited **physical infrastructure**.
- **Restricted accessibility of morphine:** Access to inexpensive morphine is necessary for pain relief to palliative care patients.
 - However, its **supply is highly regulated** by the Indian Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS).
- **Lack of understanding:** Knowledge deficits in patients, families, and health care providers about Palliative care.
- **Psychological barriers:** Palliative care has come to be associated with the end of life and dying. Most people fear and avoid anything relating to death.

Way ahead

- **Health systems governance:** Integrate palliative care into national health policies and structures with accountability mechanisms.

- **Financing:** Include essential palliative care packages in national health system budgets.
- **Enhancing accessibility of morphine:** To achieve this, countries can work with the **International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), WHO and civil society partners** to address regulatory barriers.
- **Decentralised care:** Promote home-based care and services at health and wellness centers and sub-centers.
- **Health and social care workforce:** Palliative care should be integrated in the curricula of all new health care professionals and community health care workers training.
- **Medical insurance:** Ensure significant coverage for hospice and palliative care in India.

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6. NUTRITION

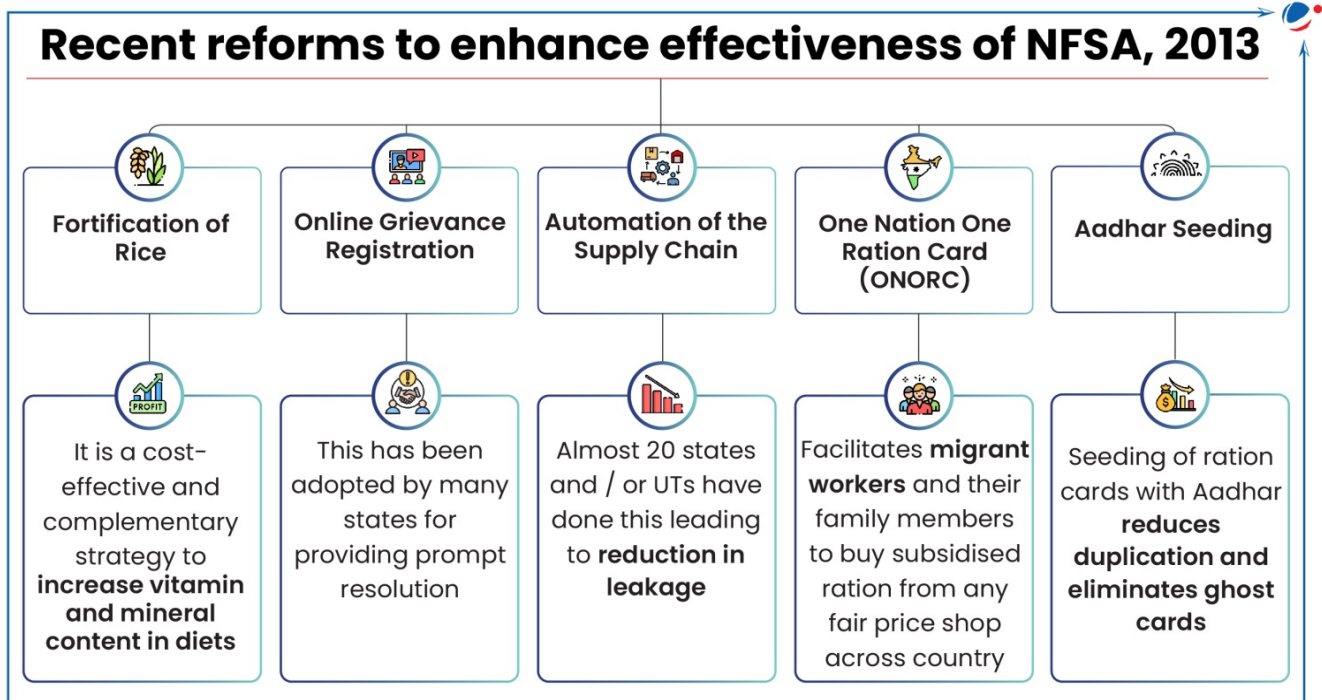
6.1. NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT (NFSA), 2013

Why in the News?

The Centre to provide **free of cost food grains for 5 year** starting from Jan 01, 2024, under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013.

More on News

- Prior to that, under NFSA, subsidized food grains were distributed at Rs 3 per kg for rice, Rs 2 per kg for wheat and at Rs 1 per kg for coarse grains to beneficiaries.
- Under NFSA, every person belonging to identified eligible households is entitled to **receive 5 Kg of food grains per person per month at subsidized prices under TPDS.**
 - The existing **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households**, which constitute the poorest of the poor, will continue to receive 35 Kg of food grains per household per month.
- However, there will be **no changes in the issue prices of food grains supplied to States for other welfare programmes** like mid-day meals (MDMs).



Challenges in NFSA

- **Identification of Beneficiaries:** Only 16 states and UTs recognize destitution as an inclusion criterion.
- **Poor Grain Management:** Excess buffer stock increases storage costs, leading to inflation and wastage.
- **PDS Leakages:** Shanta Kumar Committee reported leakages ranging from 40%-50%, with some states as high as 60%-70%.
- **Financial Unviability:** Rising production costs have substantially increased the food subsidy bill from 2014-22.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Rice-wheat procurement depletes water tables and soil nutrients.
- **WTO Challenges:** India's subsidized food security is viewed as a 'price-distorting norm.'

Way ahead to ensure food security for all

- **Identification:** Adopt standardised criteria for identification and selection of PHH to ensure rightful targeting.
- **Rationalise beneficiary:** Reduce the number of beneficiaries from current 67% to 40%. (Shanta Kumar Committee)
- **Revise Central Issue Prices (CIPs):** Link CIP with Minimum Support Prices of cereals.
- **Ensure efficient markets:** Allow private players to procure and store food grains, stopping bonuses on minimum support price (MSP) paid by states to farmers.

6.2. ANGANWADI SYSTEM

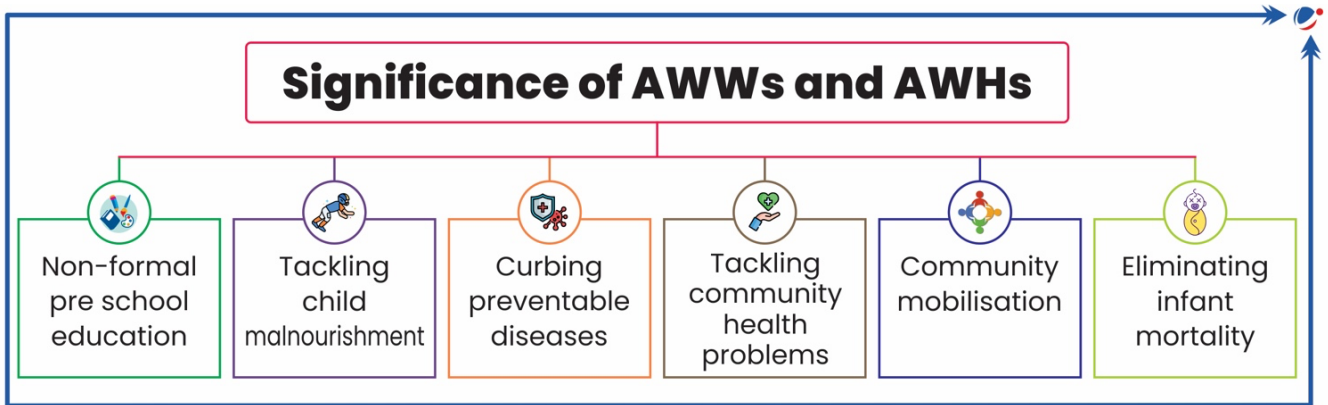
Why in the News?

Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) launched a national protocol to provide for training of Anganwadi workers to track and help children with disabilities.

About Anganwadi system

- The Anganwadi system, launched under the **Anganwadi Services Scheme** (now renamed as Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0), is an integral part of the **Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) scheme** (refer to the infographics).
 - The Anganwadi Services Scheme is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** under **MoWCD**.
 - It represents one of the **world’s largest and unique programmes for early childhood care and development**.
 - The scheme aims to:
 - ✓ **improve the nutritional and health status of children (0-6 years)**, pregnant women and lactating mothers, and
 - ✓ **reduce the incidences of mortality, morbidity and malnutrition**.
- AWCs are also **digitally strengthened** with smartphones for POSHAN tracking systems, and monitoring devices.
- **Recent initiatives:** Leveraging traditional knowledge and AYUSH practices, development of POSHAN Vatikas, Testing in accredited labs, etc.

Community health workers at grassroots			
Specification	Anganwadi workers (AWW)	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM)	Accredited Health Activist (ASHA)
Scheme	ICDS under MWCD	National Rural/Urban Health Mission [Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW)]	
Based at	Anganwadi center	Health sub-center and additionally visits villages also	Village level
Key roles	Providing early childhood care and development of the beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create awareness on factors that determine health status • Counsel women, families, and adolescents on birth preparedness • Curative care and supplies. 	Focuses on promotion of Maternal and Child Health , including immunizations and institutional-based deliveries
Incentives	Honorarium as decided by the Centre and performance linked incentive	Honorarium as decided by the Centre	Receive performance-based incentives



Challenges in Anganwadi system

- **Financial:** The scheme suffers from inconsistency in percentage increase in budget allocations over the years.
- **Inadequate number of AWCs:** There is a gap between sanctioned and operational number of AWCs across various states that ranges anywhere from 2% to 8.37%.
- **Inadequate basic amenities at AWCs:** For example, in Meghalaya only 30.85% AWCs have drinking water facilities.
- **Accessibility to technology:** Although availability of smartphones is a necessity for ICDS-CAS, many AWWs have not received smartphones affecting their functioning.
- **Inadequate human capital:** In many States/UTs, like Telangana, Bihar, Karnataka, a large number of posts of Supervisors, AWWs and AWHs have been lying vacant.
- **Remuneration:** The remuneration of the AWWs and AWHs is **still meagre in comparison to the services** being rendered by them especially in the remote and rural areas.

Way Forward

- **Expand the Coverage:** Remove the bottlenecks hindering operationalization of sanctioned AWCs/Mini AWCs in States.
- **Basic amenities:** Creating drinking water and toilet facilities in AWCs should be taken on priority basis.
- **Improve service condition:** Enhanced remunerations and better service conditions to them.
- **Effective deployment of technology:** Many AWCs suffer from lack of availability of a height and weight measuring instrument which needs immediate attention.

6.3. GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX (GHI)

Why in the News?

GHI 2023 was released by **Concern Worldwide and Welt Hunger Hilfe**, Non-Government Organisations from Ireland and Germany, respectively.

More on News

- India is **ranked 111th** among 125 countries with **GHI score of 28.7** and is categorized as **Serious on GHI Severity of Hunger Scale**.
- **South Asia and Africa South of the Sahara** regions with **highest hunger levels**, with GHI scores of 27.0 each.

GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX SCORES

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: the share of the population with **insufficient caloric intake**.



Child wasting: the share of children under age five who have **low weight for their height**, reflecting acute undernutrition.



Child stunting: the share of children under age five who have **low height for their age**, reflecting chronic undernutrition.



Child mortality: the share of children who **die before their fifth birthday**, partly reflecting the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments.

These four indicators are aggregated as follows:

$$\frac{1}{3} \text{ Under nourishment} + \frac{1}{6} \text{ Child stunting} + \frac{1}{6} \text{ Child wasting} + \frac{1}{3} \text{ Child mortality} = \text{GHI SCORE}$$

GHI Severity of Hunger Scale

Extremely Alarming GHI ≤ 50.0 Alarming GHI 35-49.9 Serious GHI 20-34.9 Moderate GHI 10-19.9 Low GHI ≤ 9.9

Issues raised by government of India on GHI

- **Methodological:** Three out of four indicators (refer image) are related to health of Children and cannot be representative of entire population.
 - Child stunting, wasting and under-5 mortality are **outcomes of complex interactions of various other factors** like drinking water, sanitation, genetics, etc. apart from hunger.
- **Small sample size:** Indicator of **Proportion of Undernourished (PoU) population** is based on **opinion poll** conducted on a **very small sample size**.
- **Use of data:** Government **questions use of data for child wasting from NFHS 5** instead of Poshan Tracker which showed child wasting prevalence of 7.2% among total of 7.24 crore under-five-year-olds.

Government initiatives to address hunger in India

- **National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013:** Recognizes the right to food as a statutory right.
- **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY):** Provide food grains free of costs to **80 crore poor**.
- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna:** Registered women were provided cash incentive of ₹ 5000/- on birth of their first child for wage support and nutritious food during pregnancy and post-delivery period.
- **POSHAN Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission):** To achieve improvement in key nutrition parameters for children and women.
- **POSHAN Tracker:** A real-time monitoring system that enables authorities to track progress and identify gaps in supply chain of service delivery.
- **Eat Right Movement:** To transform country's food system to ensure safe, healthy, and sustainable food.

Conclusion

Despite GHI imperfections, India must address its malnutrition issue. While government initiatives target nutrition, a nuanced comprehension of diverse factors is vital for effective policies combating hunger and malnutrition.

7. POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

7.1. POPULATION AT A GLANCE

Population

India has overtaken China as **the world's most populous country**, according to UN population estimates and India is likely to **retain top spot till 2100**.



Factors responsible for India's population growth

- **3rd stage of demographic transition:** Here population growth rate declines still the overall population increases.
- **Falling mortality:** The **IMR** has decreased from 40.7 in 2015–16 to **35.2 in 2019–21**.
- **Increasing Life expectancy at birth:** reached to **69.7 years** in the 2015–19 period from 31 in 1947.
- **Unintended pregnancies:** 1 in every 7 unintended pregnancies of world occurs in India.
- **Lack of female education,** child marriage and early marriages, etc.



Benefits of India's growing population

- **Economic growth:** Due to a relatively youthful workforce.
- **Urbanisation:** Urbanisation is fuelled by economic growth.
- **Innovation:** Rising demand stimulates investments, introduction of new technology.
- **Remittances:** India was the **highest recipient** of remittances from abroad at \$111 billion in 2022 (World Migration Report).
- **More weightage at global platforms:** Like higher possibility of becoming permanent member of the UNSC.



Challenges faced due to growing population

- **Pressure on resources:** As India has only **2.45%** of the global surface area and **4%** of the water resources.
- **Disruption and Conflicts:** Due to rise in struggle for finite resources.
- **Decline in social indicators:** Due to suboptimal public expenditures on health and education.
- **Pressure on economy:** Due to low skilled workforce, stagnant economy, unemployment, etc.
- **Widening gender gap:** If expenditure on health and education decline, women would suffer the most.



Measures taken by India for population management

- **National Programme for Family Planning:** It was launched in 1952.
- **National Population Policy 2000:** National Commission on Population was formed.
- **Mission Parivar Vikas:** Increased access to contraceptives
- **Postpartum Intrauterine contraceptive device (PPIUCD) incentive scheme:** PPIUCD services are provided post-delivery.
- **India Family Planning 2030 vision document:** For reducing Childbearing and early/ child marriage among others.



Way ahead to harness the benefits of population growth

- **Supporting Reproductive Justice:** Safe family planning and reproductive choice freedom.
- **Education for All:** Girls' education enhances human capital and demographic behavior.
- **Foster Inclusive Growth:** Develop democratic institutions for societal equity.
- **Facilitate Migration:** Bridge workforce demand and supply.
- **Investment in Green Technology:** Adapt to and mitigate climate change.
- **Better Geriatric Care:** Improve care, health insurance, and pensions for those aged 65+.

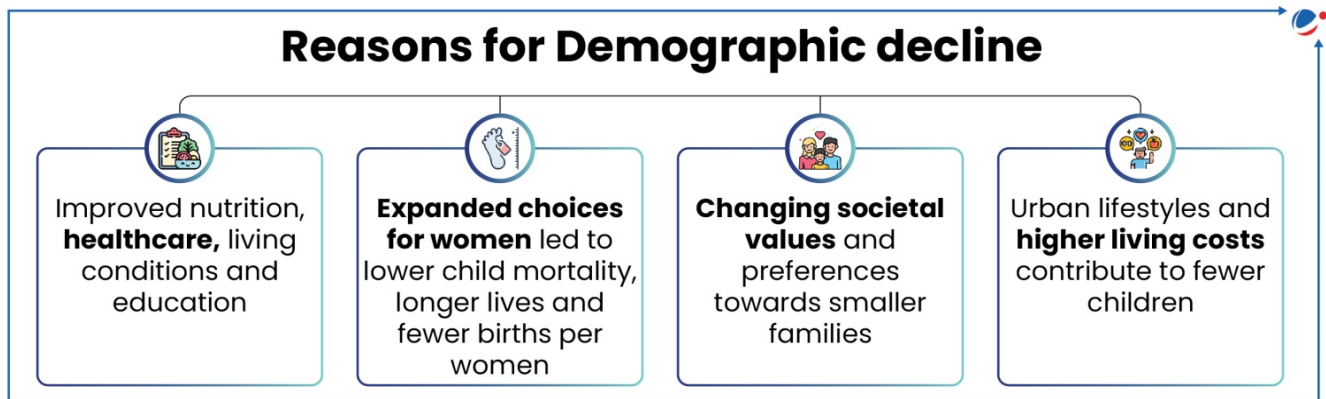
7.1.1. DECLINING DEMOGRAPHY

Why in news?

The **global population growth rate is falling fast.**

More in the news

- In **1963** total population **rose by 2.3%** and only **0.8%** in 2022 the **lowest rate since the 1950s.**
- The global **TFR** has plunged from **3.3 in 1990 to 2.3 now**, only slightly above the “replacement rate (2.1).
- Between 2022 and 2050, the populations of 61 countries **are expected to shrink by over 1%.**
- Population growth in Europe and Northern America, which in 1960 accounted for over a quarter of the world population **is now close to zero.**
- **Some countries in Asia like Japan and South Korea** are also seeing demographic decline.



Consequences of declining demography

- **Fiscal constraints:** Ageing population would reduce both saving and investment, implying higher taxes or lower spending on the elderly.
- **Declining fluid intelligence:** younger people have more fluid intelligence i.e., the ability to think creatively so as to solve the problem in entirely new ways.
 - Older people have more ‘**crystallised intelligence**’ a stock of knowledge about how things work built up over time.
- **Entrepreneurial vacuum:** Older countries and their youth are less enterprising and less comfortable in taking risk.
- **Migration:** Countries with ageing populations may attract immigrants to address workforce shortages, fostering diversity and immigration policy tensions.
- **Shifting Family Dynamics:** Decreasing family size can disrupt traditional support systems like grandparental childcare, potentially increasing elder loneliness, psychological issues etc., due to the rise in nuclear families.

Conclusion

Addressing global population decline requires investing in youth education and innovation, fostering inclusive growth, adapting economic policies to support aging populations, and encouraging balanced migration to sustain workforce needs.

7.2. YOUTH-LED DEVELOPMENT

Why in the News?

Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat, an initiative of **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports**) platform has been launched for youth on National Unity Day.

More on News

- MY Bharat provides an **over-arching institutional mechanism powered by technology for youth (15-29 years) and youth-led development.**

Why does India need to focus on youth?

- **To reap demographic dividend:** India is one of the youngest countries in world with an **average age of 29 years.**
- **Political engagement:** To increase youth's participation in **policymaking** and its **implementation** as they have emerged as strong voice in form of civil society group or non-profit organisation.
- **Economic development:** Educated and skilled, youth can help in expanding economy.
- **Environment protection:** Indian Youth is adopting '**Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE) Movement**' and promoting its underlining principle to move forward with **Sustainable development.**
- **Addressing social challenges** like gender inequality, access to quality education, and healthcare by focusing on youth.
- **International forum:** To ensure that **youth's presence at multilateral organisation** is rising to promote India's interest. **E.g.** Gita Gopinath, became the first Indian woman to be appointed as chief economist at **IMF.**

Initiatives Promoting the Role of Youth	
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Education Policy, 2020 • Smagra Shiksha (An integrated School Education), 2018
Health and Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayushman Bharat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) ◦ Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)
Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start-up and Stand-up India
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science cities/centres and Innovation Hubs • IMPacting Research INnovation and Technology (IMPRINT-2)
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Cities Mission • Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) • PM Gati Shakti.
Skill Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. • Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP)
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) program

Challenges Faced by Youth of India

- **Poor Education System:** Issues like lack of access to higher education, skill mismatch, low employability, and high dropout rates persist.
- **High Unemployment:** Educated youth face high unemployment rates, surpassing those in many developed and developing countries.
- **Exploitative Workplaces:** Youth endure low wages, long hours, harassment (especially women), and lack social security or legal protection.
- **Social Issues:** Substance abuse, communalism, discrimination, human trafficking, and forced marriages impact their values, civic sense, social responsibility, and national integration.
- **Psychological Issues:** Low confidence and self-belief can lead to depression and suicide, as seen in Kota's education hub.



- **Cultural Norms:** Societal expectations often limit young people's choices in education, career, and marriage.
- **Social Media Addiction:** Impacts mental health, relationships, and productivity among youth.

Way Forward

- **Political Empowerment:** Train youth and civil society organizations to lobby and advocate on youth issues.
- **Bridge skill gap:** Focus on vocational skills, apprenticeship degree programs, and soft skills to provide hands-on learning experiences.
- **Health and education spending:** Evidence suggests that **better health facilitates** improved **economic productivity**. In education, practical knowledge, hands-on training, industry exposure, etc. needs to be promoted.
- **Governance reforms:** Inter-ministerial coordination for strategic planning, investment, monitoring and course correction should be an important feature of this governance aspect.
- **Social and sustainable entrepreneurship:** Encourage innovative, cost-efficient, technology-enabled solutions for inclusive growth.
- **Promoting Access and Participation:** Special initiatives and drives needed for marginalised community and certain regions such as rural areas, North-east India etc.

7.3. MANUAL SCAVENGING

Why in the News?

As on November 2023, out of 766 districts in the country, 714 districts have reported themselves as manual scavenging-free.

Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013)

- 'Manual scavenger' refers to any person employed to handle, without appropriate protective gear, undecomposed human waste from an insanitary latrine, open drain or pit or railway track.
- **Prohibition and punishment:** No person or agency can engage or employ any person for manual scavenging.
 - Violation of the Act is punishable with imprisonment upto 2 years or fine upto Rs. 1 Lakh or both.
- **Responsibilities of local authorities:** Mandated to identify manual scavengers, demolish 'insanitary latrines' as well as building and maintenance of the community sanitary latrines.
- **Rehabilitation of manual scavengers:** through training in alternate employment, financial help and help with purchasing property.

Other Key initiatives taken to prevent manual scavenging

- In **Safai Karamchari vs Union of India, 2014** the Supreme Court ruled that manual scavenging is in blatant violation of Article 17.
- **National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)** provides financial assistance at concessional rates for their upliftment.
- **National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)** to promote mechanisation; rehabilitation, provision of training and protection gear, health insurance, etc.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission:** Safe collection, conveyance, treatment and disposal of all faecal sludge and sewage, and to achieve safe sustainable sanitation for all.
- **Swachhata Abhiyaan App** to capture the data of insanitary latrines still existing and manual scavengers associated with their cleaning.
- **Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan: National Campaign for Dignity and Eradication of Manual Scavenging.**

Manual Scavenging Violates		
International Conventions	Constitutional Provisions	Legal Provisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): Mandates dignity, equality, fair remuneration and social security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Article 15: State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ International Convention for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): Envisages equality, and decent living standard for women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Article 17: "Untouchability" is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scheduled Caste and Schedules Tribes Amendment Act, 2015 (SC/ST Act)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW): Eliminate violence and discrimination against women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Article 21: No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. 	

Reasons underlying persistence of the practice of manual scavenging

- **Informal economy:** This makes their identification and providing associated rights difficult.
- **Weak law:** Cleaning of human excreta with the help of protective gear is not considered manual scavenging under the MS Act, 2013.
- **Ineffective implementation:** Despite a ban since 1993, law enforcement continues the practice.
- **Water scarcity:** Inadequate water supply in rural areas forces manual removal of excreta.
- **Restoration and rehabilitation:** Complex loan processes from NSKFDC hinder access to rehabilitation funds.
- **Lack of voice:** Manual scavengers are often not organized into advocacy groups.
- **Absence of mechanisation:** Septic tanks are designed in such a way that they could be cleaned only manually.
- **Caste and class identities:** Hailing from the lowest rung of the caste and class hierarchies, they lack access to opportunities and rehabilitation becomes difficult.

Way Forward

Eliminate the demand:

- **Scientific waste disposal:** Use of technology and systematic waste segregation and treatment.
- **Replicating Kerala model:** It is being seen as a major step towards the use of technology-driven solution for manhole cleaning. E.g., Bandicoot robot for mechanized cleaning of sewers.
- **Behavioural change:** Information, Education and Communication (IEC) along with effective implementation of the law is critical.
 - Adequate provision for WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) is also necessary for such behavioural changes.

Eliminate the supply

- **Identification:** Need effective data collection to provide data-based solutions.
- **Rehabilitation and alternative employment:** Responsibility of the State to ensure effective rehabilitation and provision of employment opportunities.

7.4. INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Why in news?

75.9 million individuals were living in internal displacement at the end of 2023, according to a newly released Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) report.

About Internal displacement

- As per UNFCCC, **displacement** is a particular **form of migration**, in which individuals are forced to move against their will.
- Internally displaced persons (IDPs)** are persons who have been **forced to flee to leave their homes in order to avoid** the effects of armed conflict; situations of generalized violence; violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.

Migration

Migration is a form of **spatial mobility** of population between one geographical unit and another involving a **permanent change of Residence**.

According to Census of India, migration is of two types - Migration by **birthplace** and Migration by **place of last residence**.

Reasons for migration in India

For employment/work	To pursue studies	Marriage	Natural disaster (drought, flood, tsunami, etc)	Social / political problems (riots, terrorism, political refugee, bad law and order, etc.)	Displacement by development project

Leading reason for migration among women is **marriage (81%)**, followed by migration of **family members (10%)**, **employment (2.42%)**, and **migration for education opportunities (0.48%)**

Issues affecting IDPs

- Lack of Basic Services:** IDPs often struggle with inadequate access to essential services like healthcare, education, and clean water.
 - About 80% of seasonal **migrant children in major destinations lack access to education** near work sites.
- Lack of Social Security:** Apathy of states prevents migrants from accessing welfare entitlements.
- Vulnerability of Labour Market:** According to the PLFS, approximately three quarters of migrant women are unemployed, approximately 14% of migrant women are in self and wage-employed jobs and approximately 12% are in casual labour.

- **Political Participation:** Interstate migrants cannot exercise voting right since voting is determined by one's inclusion in the local constituency's electoral roll.
- **Inadequate data:** This hinders informed decision making.

Initiatives taken for betterment of Internal Migrants

- **National policy for rehabilitation and resettlement 2007** to minimize large-scale displacement
- **Enhancing accessibility to welfare schemes** like 'One Nation One Ration Card', Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana 2.0, Ayushman Bharat

Way ahead

- **Address research gaps:** Revise Census design to better capture sex-disaggregated migration data.
- **Targeted policy framework:** For migrants within public services and government policies.
- **Institutional reforms:** Establish 'migrant labour cells' in states; and form inter-district and inter-state coordination committees for improved service delivery.
- **Minimize development induced displacement:** Ensure compliance with PESA Act, Forest Rights Act, and Land Transfer Regulations to prevent displacement.
- **Raise awareness:** Sensitize policymakers, employers and financial institutions regarding issues faced by migrants.

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7.5. URBANIZATION AT A GLANCE

Urbanization

Urbanisation is the increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities. It is determined based on size and density of population, prominent **economic activity (non-agricultural)** and administrative structure.

Status of Urbanization in India			
Urban population: 36% (World Bank, 2023)	Future projections on urbanization: 40% population by 2036 (World Bank)	Contribution to GDP: ~60% (NITI Aayog, 2022)	Urban slums constitute around 49% of urban population. (World Bank, 2020)

Drivers of Urbanization



Significance of urbanization

- Economic:** Diversification of economic activities into manufacturing, services, and technology, efficient resource use due to economies of scale, reduced unemployment, etc.
- Social:** Better access to education and healthcare services, melting pot of cultures, languages, and traditions, etc.
- Governance:** Focussed attention on cities as an administrative entity results in responsive governance; Urban areas play significant roles in global affairs, hosting international organizations, embassies, etc.

Challenges of Urbanization

- Urban sprawl: Unplanned development** leading to rise of **slums**, worsened quality of life of the poor and **environmental degradation**.
- Ghettoisation: Social segregation** on the basis of **identities** like class, region, caste and religion. E.g., Gated communities
- Lack of social cohesion:** Rise of **individualism** leads to social **isolation** and related psychological stress.
- Inadequate infrastructure:** due to high population density, there is **high pressure** on existing infrastructure with inadequate maintenance. E.g., Railway Bridge stampede in Mumbai.
- Others:** Pollution, inequality, decline of traditional industries, disasters like urban floods, etc.

Way Forward

- Balanced urbanization:** Emphasize on development of **Tier-II, Tier-II cities**, and rural areas to curb distress migration and overpopulation.
- Urban planning:** Transit-oriented development, integration of green spaces, etc.
- Social inclusion:** Expand access to **social security nets** and financial services, provide vocational training and skill development programs tailored to the needs of the urban poor, etc.
- Governance:** Decentralize decision-making, encourage community-driven initiatives and support self-help groups in slums, etc.

7.6. PRIME MINISTER STREET VENDOR'S ATMA NIRBHAR NIDHI (PM SVANIDHI) SCHEME

Why in the news?

Recently, the State Bank of India released a report analysing the impact of PM SVANidhi on street vendors.

About PM SVANidhi Scheme

PM SVANidhi Scheme: Quick Facts			
About	Objective	Target	Benefits
<p>A micro-credit scheme for urban street vendors, launched in 2020 to facilitate street vendors in resuming their livelihood activities, after COVID-19</p>	<p>Integrating street vendors into the formal economic system and facilitating access to formal channels of credit.</p>	<p>Initial target of 50 lakh street vendors, revised to 63 lakh street vendors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facilitates Collateral-free working capital loan: Up to ₹50,000, available in 3 tranches on repayments of earlier loans. ➤ Regular repayments incentivized: with a 7% interest subsidy ➤ Rewards for Digital transactions: by way of cashback of up to ₹1,200 per year

Key Findings

- **Impact on women:** 43% women beneficiaries show increased female entrepreneurship
- **Breaking down community barriers:** 75% from non-general categories and 65% aged 26-45.
- **Popularity of Scheme:** Increase in persistency ratio (ratio of people repaying the first loan and then taking the second loan).
- **Change in financial behaviour:** The average debit card spending of PM Svanidhi account holders increased by 50% after loan installments, marking a significant change in their financial behaviour.

Issues with the scheme

- **Imposition of stamp duty for availing loan:** Stamp Duty being a State subject, its rate/amount varies across different States.
- **Documentation at the banks:** Some banks seek other documents like CIBIL scores, family photographs, a photo of them at their vending place, ration cards, etc.
- **Digital divide:** Street vendors without access to smartphones and digital literacy have difficulty applying for loans under the scheme.
- **Domicile certificate:** Many Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) are depriving migrant hawkers/vendors of licenses based on domicile certificates.
- **Lack of participation of private banks:** Participation of private banks was below 2% (as of March 2022) due to fear of loan default and higher interest rates.
- **Other issues:** Overdependence on urban local bodies for certification etc.; Lack of awareness among vendors, etc.

Way Forward

- **Exempting stamp duty** for availing loans under SVANidhi.
 - The state governments of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have issued orders to do so.
- **Expediently issuing certificates** of Vending to all the identified street vendors.



- **Banks should minimize documentation** and do away with the insistence of seeking voter ID cards, ration cards, CIBIL scores, etc.
- **Engaging civil societies** to help vendors in obtaining vending certificates from the ULBs.
- **Review the performance of private sector banks** and incentivize them to participate in lending.
- **ULBs can collaborate with the Digital Payment Aggregators (DPAs)** and share the responsibility of 'training Street Vendors on the use of QR code and their payment App/BHIM UPI App'.

7.7. SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS

Why in the News?

World Health Organization has declared loneliness a pressing global health threat and has initiated an international commission focused on tackling loneliness.

What is Social Isolation and Loneliness?

- **Social isolation** is the lack of relationships with others and little to no social support or contact.
- **Loneliness** is feeling of being alone or disconnected from others. It reflects the difference between a person's actual and desired level of connection.
 - This means that even a person with a lot of friends can feel lonely.






Factors Responsible for Social Isolation and Loneliness

- **Migration Issues:** Relocation can lead to isolation due to language barriers, financial struggles, and cultural adaptation.
- **Personality Types:** Higher conscientiousness and neuroticism increase loneliness.
- **Internet Addiction:** Excessive online activity reduces face-to-face interactions.
- **Extended Working Hours:** Long work hours and limited leisure time can lead to preferred solitude.
- **Professional Failures:** Comparisons and evaluations can lower self-esteem, causing isolation.
- **Older Adults:** Retirement, empty nest syndrome, and loss of colleagues intensify loneliness.
- **Social Exclusion:** Gender, race, and other exclusions lead to isolation and loneliness.

Impact of social isolation and loneliness

- **Health Risks** with about a **50% increased risk of dementia, 29% increased risk of heart disease** and **32% increased risk of stroke**.
- **Adoption of unhealthy habits:** Substance abuse, disrupted cycle and poor quality of sleep etc. lead to daytime fatigue, irritability, lack of focus and loss of productivity.
- **Increased risk of premature deaths** from all causes, which may rival those of **smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity**.
- **Diminished job satisfaction and performance results from** experiencing a sense of isolation and lack of support in workplace. Loneliness costs US economy an estimated \$406 billion a year.
- **Poor education outcome:** Young people experiencing loneliness in high school are more likely to drop out of university.

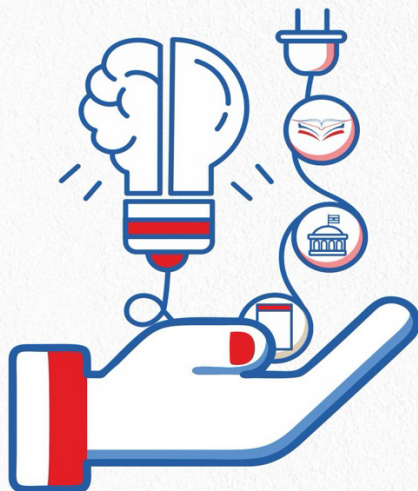
Benefits of More Connected Communities

-  Enjoy significantly better health outcomes
-  Lower levels of community violence
-  Economic Prosperity
-  Civic Engagement and Representative Government
-  Natural Hazard Preparation and Resilience

Way Forward to Address Social Isolation and Loneliness

- **Community Level**
 - Ensure accessible, secure infrastructure like parks and community centers.
 - Promote engagement in social causes and activities like volunteering at old age homes.
 - Create intergenerational support programs to reduce loneliness for older adults.
- **Individual Level**
 - Adopt personalized programs like mindfulness and meditation.
 - Build meaningful relationships and support systems.
- **Societal Level**
 - Launch educational campaigns on loneliness.
 - Advocate for policies addressing social isolation.
 - Secure funding for loneliness program development and evaluation.

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- » Public Administration
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7.8. SUICIDES AT A GLANCE

Suicides

Suicide is a **personal tragedy that prematurely takes the life of an individual** and has a continuing ripple effect, affecting the lives of families, friends and communities. **(NCRB)**

Suicide trends in India

India has the highest number of suicides in the world. (1.71 lakh people died by suicide in 2022)	Suicide rate has increased to 12.4 per 1 Lakh —the highest rate ever recorded in India.	Suicide rate among Indian women and girls is twice that of global average. (Lancet)	Age-group 18-45 years remains most vulnerable and accounted for around 2/3rd of the suicides in 2021.
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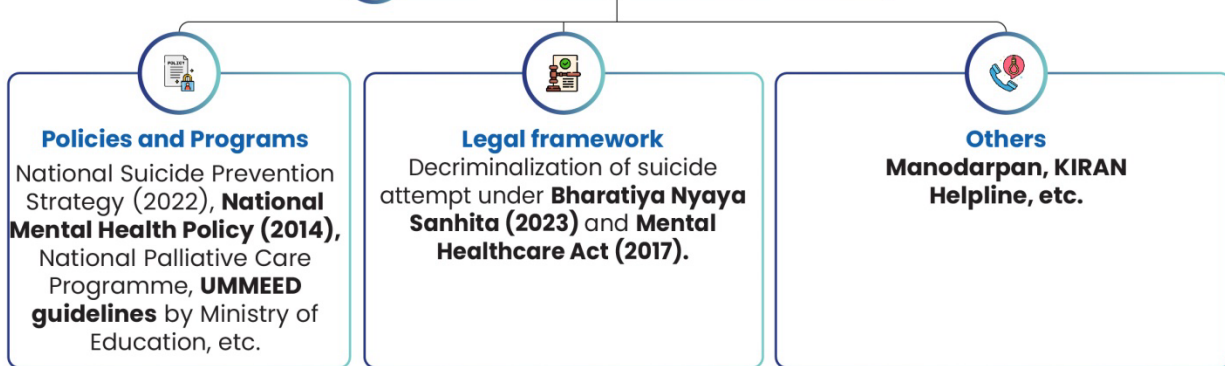
Drivers of suicide risk in India

- **Individual:** **Mental health** issues, substance abuse, relationship problems, etc.
- **Social:** Lack of social support, bullying and harassment, stigmatization of mental health issues, family disputes etc.
- **Economic:** Financial hardships, unemployment, etc.
- **Factors for rising suicides among farmers:** Crop failure, poverty, **indebtedness**, lack of remunerative markets, etc.
- **Factors for rising suicides among women:** Domestic, physical and emotional **abuse**, taboo against victims of sexual crime, marital rape, peri-menopausal symptoms (major cause of mental health disorders among women aged between 42 and 52 years), etc.
- **Factors for rising suicide among students:** Young age and lack of rational outlook, academic distress, isolation and lack of familial support system, social media suicidal ideation, etc.
- **Factors for rising suicide among armed forces:** Poor Service and working conditions, personal issues such as sense of isolation, lack of social and familial support, etc.

Consequences of Suicides

- **For family:** Emotional trauma, financial hardship, family disruption, etc.
- **For society:** **Stigmatization** for survivors of suicide attempt, copycat suicides, failure of social norms to regulate individual behavior, etc.
- **For country:** Strain on healthcare system, loss of human capital, increased social welfare costs, potential impact on national image, etc.

Steps taken for suicide prevention



Emerging challenges in suicide prevention

- **Media message and publicity of suicide:** Continuous press reports of suicidal attempts by celebrities and public figures increases the vulnerability of the general population to suicides.
- **Impact of internet and other communication networks:** Teenagers being lured to risk-taking behaviors such as substance abuse and promiscuous sexual relationships over mobile phones and internet.
- **Emerging technologies:** Rise AI-powered virtual companions (e.g., AI Girlfriends) exacerbating loneliness, endangering emotional stability & increasing solitude amongst men in the US.
- **Legal uncertainties:** Legal confusion over Euthanasia, recognition of homosexual marriages, etc., increases the risk factors for suicides
- **Weakening family structure:** Function of emotional support neglected due to economic pursuits. E.g. Both parents working in a nuclear family may isolate the child.

Way Forward

- **Role of the state:** Setting up a cross-sectoral/ministerial commission to prioritize suicide prevention, effective monitoring, adequate financial allocations, etc.
- **Role of civil society and media:** Provide crisis support to individuals, advocacy for legal reforms, responsible media reporting, etc.
- **Role of educational institutions:** Strengthen easy and safe access to counselling in schools, curriculum reforms to emphasize on development of life skills, etc.
- **Learning from the best practices:** Tamil Nadu allowed students to write supplementary exams, Sri Lanka appointed 'Registrar of Pesticides' and established National Poisons Information Centre.



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8. INDIAN SOCIETY

8.1. SOCIAL IDENTITIES AT A GLANCE

Social Identities

Social identity refers to people's **self-categorizations** in relation to their **group memberships** (the “we”). These categorizations are generally assigned to us or something we are born into.

Types of social identities include **caste, race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social class**, etc.

Social identities have undergone significant changes owing to **structural transformations** marked by **shift from agriculture to secondary and tertiary activities, rural-to-urban migration, demographic transition**, etc.

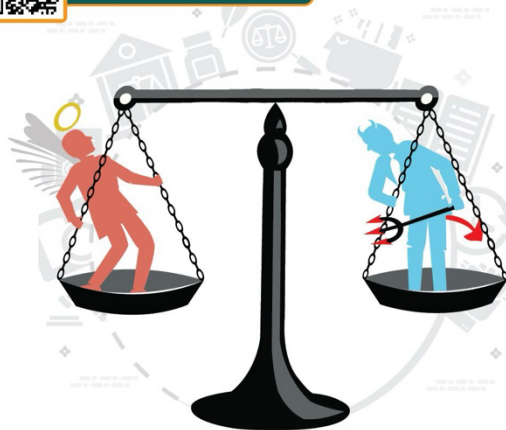
Relationship between Social Identities and Structural transformations

- **Inequality and Marginalization:** Challenging for certain marginalised groups like tribal populations to adapt contributing to disparities in wealth, income, and employment.
- **Political power:** Can either reinforce existing power imbalances or create opportunities for marginalized groups to challenge and reshape these dynamics.
- **Labour Market:** Changes such as automation or globalization, can affect different social groups differently, depending on factors like skill levels, education, and historical patterns of discrimination.
- **Social Movements:** Social identities can be a driving force behind social movements and activism advocating for economic justice and structural changes.

*Different social identities and their contemporary changes have been discussed in subsequent articles.



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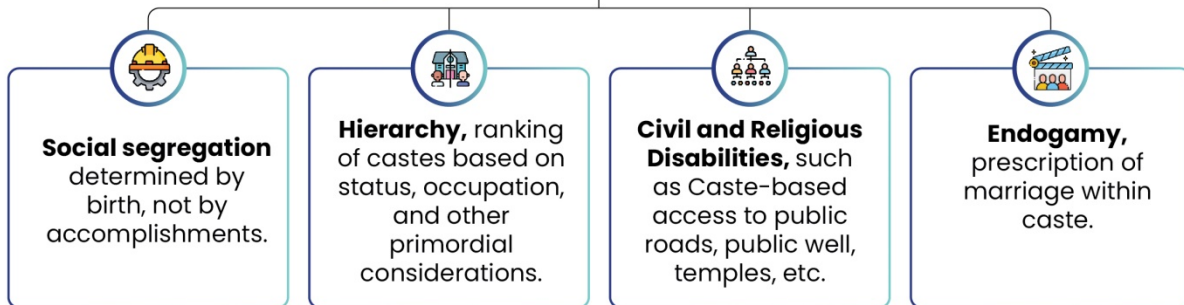


8.2. CASTE SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

Caste System

Caste is a system of social stratification involving the **ranking** according to **birth**, prescribing a set of norms, values and sanctions which govern social behaviour within caste.

Key features of Caste system



Weakening of Caste identities

- **Education:** Increased access to education has exposed people to diverse ideas and challenged some caste-based notions.
- **Urbanization:** Migration to urban areas result in loosening traditional caste ties and restrictions, better occupational mobility, etc.
- **Inter-caste marriages:** Increasing occurrence of inter-caste marriages is gradually blurring caste lines.
- **Legal and policy:** Anti-discrimination laws such as Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act (1989), provision of reservation for backward classes, etc.
- **Globalization:** Exposure to global cultures and values has influenced younger generations' perspectives on caste.

Strengthening of Caste identities

- **Demand for recognition:** Demand of **caste-based census** to officially recognize their population size and socio-economic status.
- **Political mobilization:** Rise of caste-based political parties has reinforced caste identities for political gain.
- **Demand for reservation:** Demands for reservation by various castes (e.g., Jats, Patels) have intensified caste-based mobilization.
- **Social media and technology:** Caste-based groups on platforms like WhatsApp have made it easier for people to connect based on caste identities.
- **Marriage preferences:** e.g., Proliferation of caste-based matrimonial websites.

Conclusion

While significant progress has been made in reducing caste-based discrimination and promoting social mobility, a continuous efforts in education, legal reforms, economic development, and cultural change are essential to further weaken caste identities and promote a more inclusive and equitable society.

8.2.1. CASTE CENSUS

Why in the News?

State government of Bihar recently released a report on caste survey conducted in state, after a resolution passed by state legislature for the same.

Census in India

- Census is a **Union subject (entry 69 of union list under Schedule VII)** under **Article 246** of constitution.
- **In 2011, Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC)** was conducted.
 - In 2016, **SECC data, excluding caste data**, was finalized and published.
 - In 2021, Central Government, in an affidavit submitted to SC, stated that caste/tribe data derived from SECC 2011 is deemed "defective" and "not suitable for use".

Arguments for caste census	Arguments against caste census
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional mandate: Article 340 mandates appointing a commission to investigate socially and educationally backward classes. • Social justice and reforms in reservation policy: Helps determine inclusion of new castes and graduation of creamy layers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Caste data enables fair reservation through 'quota-within-quota'. • Evidence-based policymaking: Facilitates policies for the underprivileged. • Fostering diversity: Monitors caste representation in elected bodies and civil services. • Judicial requirement: Indra Sawhney case mandates assessment of "backwardness" and periodic review by experts. • Annihilation of caste: Abolishing caste-derived privileges requires mapping castes and their socio-economic status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional provisions: Constitution refers to backward classes, not backward castes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The word "caste" is used only for 'scheduled castes'. • Data enumeration difficulties: Thousands of castes, inter-caste marriages, hypergamy, and migration complicate data collection. • Potential for political misuse: Caste data could be exploited for vote bank politics. • Rise in demand: Increased demand for reservations in jobs and education. • Risk of resentment: Inter-caste tensions may hinder inclusivity and harmony.

Way Forward

- **Create political consensus:** Decisions on socio-political issues should involve broad political agreement.
- **Inclusive consultations:** Engage community leaders, experts, social scientists, and research institutions in the caste census process.
- **Identify caste and subcaste:** Conduct preliminary socio-anthropological studies at State and district levels to identify all sects and sub-castes.
- **Use of technology:** Utilize AI, Big Data Analytics, etc., to analyze and assess caste-based data.

8.2.2. EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AND CASTE IDENTITIES IN INDIA

Why in the News?

Lately, caste-based discrimination has risen in both tech usage and representation of marginalized caste groups in the workforce.

Emerging technologies exacerbating caste disparities

- **Upper caste dominance of social media (SM):** Less representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on SM. (2019 survey by Lokniti and CSDS).
- **Digital divide:** Disadvantaged caste groups face disparities in both device ownership and digital skills.
 - It exacerbates inequalities in accessing education, healthcare, employment, and social mobility.

- **Algorithmic bias:** E.g., an **AI-based predictive policing system** may perpetuate unjust criminalization and discrimination against marginalized communities.
- **Workforce representation:** Underrepresentation of marginalized caste groups in the technology workforce.
- **Social stigma and segregation:** Hate speech and online harassment based on caste identities can contribute to social stigma and reinforce existing prejudices.

Emerging technologies addressing caste disparities

- **Digital inclusion:** Affordable and accessible technology infrastructure can help mainstream of marginalized social groups.
- **Political mobilization:** Use of social media platforms to enhance political participation and advocacy of marginalized groups.
- **Access to resources:** Enhance access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities through affordable technology solutions.
- **Social awareness:** Social media platforms can be utilized to raise awareness against caste-based discrimination, promote inclusivity, and challenge stereotypes.
- **Community empowerment:** Empower communities by providing information, resources, and networking opportunities.
 - E.g., Use of AI-based platforms for the registration of cases of atrocities.

Way Forward: Rooting the idea of non-discrimination in Technology.

- **Recognize Caste Bias:** To re-contextualize datasets with socio-cultural values to mitigate algorithmic caste bias.
- **Develop Fairness Metrics & Constraints:** To develop non-discriminatory systems and technologies through periodic evaluation.
- **Promote Diversity and Inclusivity:** Adequate representation of marginalized groups in the technology workforce.
- **Meaningfully Support Marginalized Communities:** Through sufficient and appropriate funding.
- **Eliminate Caste in AI:** Anti-caste ethical guidelines and their effective implementation.



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8.3. FAMILY STRUCTURE AT A GLANCE

Family Structure

Family usually refers to a group of individuals living together during important phases of their lifetime and bound to each other by **biological and/or social and psychological relationship**.



Types of Family Structures



Based on structure: Joint family and Nuclear family.



Based on nature of authority: Matriarchal family (e.g., Khasis) and Patriarchal family.



Other forms: Single-parent family, Extended family, etc.



Functions of family

- **Socialization:** Teaching, transmitting beliefs, values, attitudes, and coping mechanisms, etc.
- **Reproductive:** Family also helps regulate sexual activity and sexual reproduction.
- **Economic:** Provide financial aid for members as well as meeting monetary needs of society.
- **Physical:** Provide a safe, comfortable environment necessary to growth, development and rest/recuperation.



Characteristics of traditional Indian Family



At least 2 adults, in general, of opposite sex residing together



Division of labour among members



Economic and social exchanges



Sharing of resources such as food, residence, etc.



Authority over children and **obligation** for protection, cooperation, and nurturance.



Contemporary changes in Family structure

- **Nuclearization of family:** Virtual disappearance of traditional joint family system.
- **Changing authority:** Rise in proportion of **female-headed households** and **single-parent families**.
- **Shrinking of kinship ties:** Emphasis on close relatives in familial decisions.
- **Reduced patriarchy:** Decisions in households taken by consultations.
- **Gender roles:** Increasing acceptance of **girl child** and increase in their role in **economic activities**.
- **Fertility and childcare:** Postponement of first pregnancy, professional caretaking of children, diminished role of family in socialization of children, etc.



Factors Responsible for Changes in Family Structure

- **Industrialization and urbanization:** Resulting in **migration** to urban areas and **nuclearization** of families.
- **Cultural:** Emphasis on **individualism**, increasing acceptance of non-traditional relationships such as homosexual relations and live-in arrangements.
- **Socio-economic mobility:** Increasing access to education and employment opportunities has restructured the family dynamics.
- **Globalization: Consumerist culture** has weakened the emotional bondage, transfer of dependency burden of family from younger to older generations due to migration.
- **Technology:** Disruption of traditional in-person interactions affects depth and quality of personal conversations, which can increase conflicts within families.



Impact of changing Family Structure

- **Women:** Increased **autonomy** and pressure of **dual responsibility**, better economic opportunities and social mobility, and **redefined gender roles**.
- **Transgender:** Increasing visibility and **acceptance** in society, relaxation in gender norms, difficulties in **personal identity formation and recognition of rights**.
- **Children:** Strong sense of **individual identity and autonomy**, **lack of social support**, challenges of single parent household and lack of cultural identification.

Conclusion

The landscape of Indian families has changed significantly, transitioning from traditional joint family system to more nuclear and non-traditional family arrangements. By fostering open communication, setting boundaries, and prioritizing quality time together, families can navigate these changes while maintaining strong connections and support networks.

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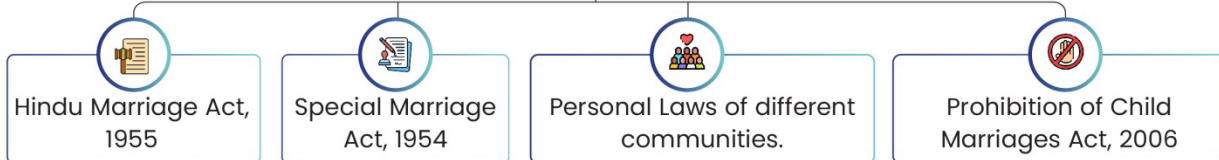


8.4. MARRIAGE AT A GLANCE

Marriage

Marriage is a social institution providing **social and legal sanction** for the union of a man and a woman as partners.

Laws governing marriages in India



Functions of marriage

- **Biological:** Providing social **recognition to sexual union**, important function of marriage is to **beget children**.
- **Social: Social acceptance** of couple forms basis of formation of a **family**. **Rituals** from birth to death are linked to marriage and related **responsibilities**.
- **Cultural and Religious Significance:** Many cultures and religions view marriage as a sacred institution, often with rituals and traditions.
- **Inheritance and Kinship:** Marriage often helps define inheritance rights and establish kinship ties.

Contemporary changes in institution of marriage

Structural

- **Delayed marriages:** Due to focus on **education and career** and the idea of **individualism**.
- **Inter-caste and inter-religious marriages:** Norms of **endogamy** have weakened to some extent as **secular factors** like **education, class and status** are important in **partner selection**.
- **Increased instances of Divorce:** Divorce as a **taboo** has reduced importance. There are increased instances of **serial monogamy- divorce and remarriage**.
- **Live in relationship:** Challenging the notion of marriage, long-term **cohabitation without marriage**.

Functional

- **Changed functions: Traditional functions of procreation** and sexual division of labour have weakened. Marriages have adopted a significant **role of emotional support**. E.g., Double Income No Kid (**DINK**) families.
- **Changes in sexual division of labour:** As both husband and wife are employed and earn, it has reduced the **patriarchal division of labour**.
- **Same-sex relationships: LGBTQIA+ marriages** negate the procreation function, and uphold gender fluidity of relationships.

Factors behind changes in the institution of marriage

- **Economic:** Increased economic independence among women leading to later marriages, higher divorce rates, and more single-parent households.
- **Cultural shifts: Liberal** attitudes towards marriage, sexuality, and family result in greater acceptance of cohabitation, same-sex marriage, and non-traditional family structures.
- **Individualism:** Modern societies emphasize individualism and personal fulfilment. This has shifted the focus of marriage from economic necessity and social obligation to personal happiness and compatibility.
- **Demographics:** Demographic trends, such as aging populations and declining birth rates, also influence marriage patterns.
- **Legal Changes:** Legal and policy reforms, such as the legalization of same-sex marriage, and improved legal protections for women and children.

Conclusion

The institution of marriage will likely continue to evolve, reflecting greater diversity, inclusivity, and an ongoing redefinition of roles and relationships within the family unit.

8.4.1. LIVE-IN RELATIONSHIPS

Why in the News?

The recently introduced **Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Act, 2024** mandates **compulsory registration for all live-in relationships in the state**, irrespective of residency **with registrar**.

More on the News

- Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code (UCC) **requires compulsory registration with the state** while starting or ending a live-in relationship for heterosexual couples.
 - This record will be kept in a police station.
- There is also **provision for providing for maintenance to the woman when “deserted” by her partner**.
- It also prescribes **jail term of up to six months for not producing a “certificate” of the relationship**.
- It imposes **stringent terms on a consensual relationship between adults and raises constitutional concerns of privacy and personal liberty**.

Live in Relationship in India

- In India, **live-in relationships are not explicitly governed by law or custom**.
- However, through judicial decisions, the **Supreme Court has expanded the recognition of live-in partnerships** and established guidelines for handling such relationships.
- **Supreme Court Judgements related to Live-In Relationships:**
 - **Lalita Toppo vs The State of Jharkhand (2018)**: SC ruled under provisions of Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA 2005) the live-in-partner would be entitled to more relief than what is contemplated under Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.
 - **Indra Sarma v. VKV Sarma (2013)**: Court affirmed that entering into a mutual live-in relationship is not illegal if both partners are unmarried, and it does not constitute an offense.

How is Live-in Relationship Affecting Marriage as Institution?

Social change, global influence, urbanization, and cosmopolitan norms have **increased acceptance of pre-marital cohabitation and live-in arrangements**, especially among younger generations.

- **Individual Autonomy**: The concept of live-in relationships is rooted in the desire for **personal autonomy and freedom of choice, especially** in the face of **historically prevalent arranged marriages and societal expectations**.
- **Evolving Views on Commitment**: The **concept of commitment has evolved to emphasize emotional connection, communication, and compatibility**, reducing the sanctity of marriage as the ultimate symbol of commitment.
- **Testing Compatibility**: Live-in relationships offer **a way to test domestic compatibility before marriage**, addressing concerns about restrictive or cumbersome marriage procedures.
- **Legal and Social Dynamics**: Despite legal recognition, societal acceptance of live-in relationships challenges traditional family structures and raises debates on legal reforms.
- **Family Impact**: Live-in relationships challenge traditional family structures, leading to generational conflicts and societal tensions, especially in conservative communities.
- **Economic Considerations**: Concerns about financial stability, asset division in case of divorce, and prenuptial agreements is nudging toward live in relationships.

Conclusion

To address the ambiguity that often leads to conflicting opinions and judgments, it is imperative to enact separate legislation specifically addressing live-in relationships. Ambiguous clauses in current legislation must be revised to clearly define the status and rights of children born within such relationships.

8.5. GLOBALIZATION AT A GLANCE

Globalization

It can be understood as the **growing interdependence of global economies, culture and population** brought about by **cross-border movement of goods, services, investments, technology, and people**.

Factors for globalization



Positives of Globalization

- **On Elderly:** Improved access to quality healthcare services, enhanced communication to their loved ones, etc.
- **On Women:** Better job opportunities, global networking opportunities for women, greater advocacy for women's rights, etc.
- **On Culture:** Promotion of rationalism and scientific temper, changing role of women, globalization of culture (**Yoga, Ayurveda, etc.**), among others.
- **Governance:** Trans-national cooperation of global issues such as climate change, policy convergence with international best practices, etc.

Negatives of Globalization

- **On Elderly:** Loss of traditional livelihood, widening inter-generational gap, emergence of nuclear families and broken homes, etc.
- **On Women:** **Objectification** and commodification of women, loss of job due to adoption of technology, cyber harassment and online violence against women, etc.
- **On Culture:** Consumerism, cultural **homogenization**, proliferation of orthodoxy as a reaction to homogenization, etc.
- **Governance:** Loss of sovereignty, challenges in regulating emerging technologies, etc.

Contemporary trends

- **Strengthening globalization:** Cooperation on global issues like climate change, AI Governance, etc.
- **Weakening globalization:** Protectionist measures like trade barriers, trade wars between China and USA, etc.
- **Glocalization**
 - **Internationalization of local ideas.** E.g., International Yoga Day.
 - **Localization of global ideas** E.g. Fusion food like Aloo Tikki Burger; Netflix's local prioritization, etc.

Conclusion

Key to harnessing globalization's potential lies in creating inclusive policies that distribute its benefits more equitably requires cooperation at local, national, and international levels, as well as a commitment to sustainable and ethical practices.

8.6. REGIONALISM AT A GLANCE

Regionalism

Regionalism is a politico-economic movement promoting cause of a particular region. It emanates from a **profound sense of identity** associated with people's love for their **region, culture, language**, etc.



Factors for rise of Regionalism



Challenges of Regionalism

- **Skewed federalism:** Issues of **Centre-State relations** with lack of equitable treatment to all states results in rise of regionalism.
- **Identity politics:** E.g.; demand for a separate **Gorkhaland** in West Bengal, **Bodoland** in Assam.
- **Threat to national integrity:** E.g.; Demand of Greater Nagalim by Naga insurgent groups.
- **Impact on foreign relations:** E.g.; Impact of Tamil sentiments on India's relations with Sri Lanka.



Positives of Regionalism

- **Cultural preservation:** Helps preserve diverse local cultures, languages, and traditions across India.
- **Competitive federalism:** Encourages healthy competition among states for development and investment.
- **Development:** Can lead to focused development of specific regions based on their **unique needs** and resources.
- **Safety valve:** Can act as safety valve to curb secessionist movement in the country.



Conclusion

Indian state needs to be **elastic** (to address genuine grievances) and **strong** (to counter divisiveness and secessionist tendencies) at the same time to achieve the ideal of 'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat'.

8.7. SECULARISM AT A GLANCE

Secularism

Secularism is the principle of **separation of state from religious institutions.**



3-models of State-Religion relationship



Proximity (e.g.; Ancient Roman Empire)



Wall of Separation (e.g.; France)



Principled Distance (e.g.; India)



Constitutional Provisions in India

- Word “**Secular**” added in the **Preamble** (42nd Amendment, 1976)
- **Fundamental Rights:**
 - **Article 15 and 16:** Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion.
 - **Articles 25-28:** Right to freedom of Religion.
- **Article 325 and 326:** Non-discrimination among citizens in the area of voting and representation on the basis of religion.
- **S. R. Bommai vs. Uoi Judgment (1994):** Secularism is part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution.

Difference between Indian and Western Secularism



Western Model of Secularism

- **Negative concept:** Complete separation between religion (church) and state (politics).
- Religion and state power have their own **distinct spheres and boundaries.**
- Applicable due to **intra-religious homogeneity** in social sphere.



Indian Model of Secularism: Sui generis

- **Positive concept:** To give equal respect to all religions and protect all religions equally.
- Indian state can create a **prohibitive relationship with religion.** E.g., Laws banning untouchability, child marriages, etc.
- Applicable due to **inter and intra- religious diversity** in India.



Significance of Secularism

- **Constitutional ethos:** Secularism aids in upholding democratic principles while promoting religious tolerance.
- **Reasonable restrictions:** To address issues like child marriages, discrimination based on caste, gender, etc.
- **Protection of Minority:** Safeguards the rights and freedoms of religious minorities.
- **Social harmony:** Secularism allows for the blending of various cultural and religious traditions and promotes tolerance and mutual respect among different religious groups.

Challenges due to Secularism

- **Homogenization:** Secularism may lead to cultural homogenization among different communities. E.g., Debate surrounding **Uniform Civil Code in India**.
- **Religiosity vs. communalism:** Thin line of differentiation between religiosity and communalism in public life.
- **Art and expression:** Need to balance freedom of expression with respect for religious sentiments in art, literature, and media.
- **Culture:** Cultural traditions, food habits, etc., are strongly inter-woven around religion.

Conclusion

India's unique brand of secularism, which aims to respect all religions rather than separate religion from state entirely, enables a process of negotiation and adaptation which is crucial to promote the composite culture of India.

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PAPER	GS - I & II	GS - III & IV	ESSAY	OPTIONAL - I & II
DATE	24 AUG	25 AUG	31 AUG	1 SEP



9. PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS 2013-2023 (SYLLABUS-WISE)

GS I: Indian Heritage & Culture, History & Geography of the World & Society

Society: Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.

- Do you think marriage as a sacrament in losing its value in Modern India? (150 Words) (2023) 10
- Why is caste identity in India both fluid and static? (250 word) (2023) 15
- Given the diversities among tribal communities in India, in which specific contexts should they be considered as a single category. (150 words) (2022) 10
- Analyse the salience of 'sect' in Indian society vis-a-vis caste, region and religion. (250 words) (2022) 15
- Examine the uniqueness on tribal knowledge system when compared with mainstream knowledge and cultural system. (150 words) (2021) 10
- How does Indian society maintain continuity in traditional social values? Enumerate the changes taking place in it. (250 words) (2021) 15
- Customs and traditions suppress reason leading to obscurantism. Do you agree? (250 words) (2020) 15
- What makes Indian society unique in sustaining its culture? Discuss. (150 words) (2019) 10
- Do we have cultural pockets of small India all over the nation? Elaborate with examples. (250 words) (2019) 15
- In the context of diversity of India, can it be said that the regions form cultural units rather than the States? Give reasons with examples for your viewpoint. (150 words) (2017) 10
- The spirit tolerance and love is not only an interesting feature of Indian society from very early times, but it is also playing an important part at the present. Elaborate. (250 words) (2017) 15
- Describe any four cultural elements of diversity in India and rate their relative significance in building a national identity. (2015) 12.5
- The life cycle of a joint family depends on economic factors rather than social values. Discuss. (2014) 10

Role of women and women's organization

- Explain why suicide among young women is increasing in Indian Society. (150 words) (2023) 10
- Can the vicious cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition be broken through microfinancing of women SHGs? Explain with examples. (150 words) (2021) 10
- Examine the role of 'Gig economy' in the process of empowerment of women. (150 words) (2021) 10
- Discuss the desirability of greater representation to women in higher judiciary to ensure diversity, equity and inclusiveness. (Answer in 150 words) (2021) 10
- "Though women in post-Independence India have excelled in various fields, the social attitude towards women and feminist movement has been patriarchal." Apart from women education and women empowerment schemes, what interventions can help change this milieu? Answer in 250 words) (2021) 15
- "Empowering women is the key to control population growth". Discuss (150 words) (2019) 10
- What are the continued challenges for women in India against time and space? (250 words) (2019) 15
- 'Women's movement in India has not addressed the issues of women of lower social strata. Substantiate your view. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- How do you explain the statistics that show that the sex ratio in Tribes in India is more favourable to women than the sex ratio among Scheduled Castes? (2015) 12.5
- How does patriarchy impact the position of a middle-class working woman in India? (2014) 10
- Discuss the various economic and socio-cultural forces that are driving increasing feminization of agriculture in India. (2014) 10
- Why do some of the most prosperous regions of India have an adverse sex ratio for women? Give your arguments. (2014) 10
- Male membership needs to be encouraged in order to make women's organization free from gender bias. Comment. (200 words) (2013) 10



Population and associated issues: Poverty and developmental issues

- Child cuddling is now being replaced by mobile phones. Discuss its impact on the socialization of children. (150 words) (2023) (10)
- COVID-19 pandemic accelerated class inequalities and poverty in India. Comment. (2020) 10
- ‘Despite implementation of various programmes for eradication of poverty by the government in India, poverty is still existing.’ Explain by giving reasons. (Answer in 150 words) (2018) 10
- Mention core strategies for the transformation of aspirational districts in India and explain the nature of convergence, collaboration and competition for its success. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty OR poverty is the main cause of population increase in India. (2015) 12.5
- Discuss the changes in the trends of labour migration within and outside India in the last four decades. (2015) 12.5
- “An essential condition to eradicate poverty is to liberate the poor from deprivation.” Substantiate this statement with suitable examples (2016) 12.5
- Defying the barriers of age, gender and religion, the Indian women became the torch bearer during the struggle for freedom in India. Discuss. (200 words) (2013) 10

Urbanization, their problems and their remedies

- Does urbanization lead to more segregation and/or marginalization of the poor in Indian metropolises? (250 words) (2023) 15
- How is the growth of Tier 2 cities related to the rise of a new middle class with an emphasis on the culture of consumption? (150 words) (2022) 10 marks
- What are the main socioeconomic implications arising out of the development of IT industries in major cities of India? (250 words) (2021) 15
- Account for the huge flooding of million cities in India including the smart ones like Hyderabad and Pune. Suggest lasting remedial measures. (Answer in 250 words) (2020) 15
- How is efficient and affordable urban mass transport key to the rapid economic development of India? (250 words) (2019) 15
- “The ideal solution of depleting ground water resources in India is water harvesting system.” How can it be made effective in urban areas? (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- The growth of cities as I.T. hubs has opened up new avenues employment but has also created new problems. Substantiate this statement with examples. (250 words) (2017) 15
- With a brief background of quality of urban life in India, introduce the objectives and strategy of the ‘Smart City Programme’. (2016) 12.5
- Major cities of India are becoming more vulnerable to flood conditions. Discuss. (2016) 12.5
- Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata are the three mega cities of the country, but the air pollution is much more serious problem in Delhi as compared to the other two. Why is this so? (2015) 12.5
- Smart cities in India cannot sustain without smart villages. Discuss this statement in the backdrop of rural-urban integration. (2015) 12.5
- Discussion the various social problems which originated out of the speedy process of urbanization in India. 2013

Effects of Globalization on Indian society

- Elucidate the relationship between globalization and new technology in a world of scarce resources, with special reference to India. (250 words) (2022) 15
- Explore and evaluate the impact of ‘Work from Home’ on family relationship. (2022)10
- Is diversity and pluralism in India under threat due to globalisation? Justify your answer. (2020) 15
- Are we losing our local identity for the global identity? Discuss. (250 words) (2019) 15
- ‘Globalization is generally said to promote cultural homogenization but due to these cultural specificities appear to be strengthened in the Indian Society. Elucidate. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15



- Discuss the positive and negative effects of globalization on women in India. (2015) 12.5
- To what extent globalization has influenced the core of cultural diversity in India? Explain. (2016) 12.5
- Critically examine the effects of globalization on the aged population in India. 2013

Social empowerment

- How have digital initiatives in India contributed to the functioning of the education system in the country? Elaborate your answer. (Answer in 250 words) (2020) 15
- Has caste lost its relevance in understanding the multi-cultural Indian Society? Elaborate your answer with illustrations. (Answer in 150 words) (2020) 10
- “Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence, caste system cannot be eradicated in India.” Comment. (Answer in 150 words) (2018) 10
- What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence, addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (STs)? (150 words) (2017) 10
- Why are the tribals in India referred to as the Scheduled Tribes? Indicate the major provisions enshrined in the Constitution of India for their upliftment. (2016) 12.5
- Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, despite having divergent approaches and strategies, had a common goal of amelioration of the downtrodden. Elucidate. (2015) 12.5
- Debate the issue of whether and how contemporary movements for assertion of Dalit identity work towards annihilation of caste. (2015) 12.5

Regionalism

- Do you agree that regionalism in India appears to be a consequence of rising cultural assertiveness? Argue. (Answer in 150 words) (2020) 10
- Discuss whether formation of new states in recent times is beneficial or not for the economy of India. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- Has the formation of linguistic States strengthened the cause of Indian Unity? (2016) 12.5
- What is the basis of regionalism? Is it that unequal distribution of benefits of development on regional basis eventually promotes regionalism? Substantiate your answer. (2016) 12.5
- Growing feeling of regionalism is an important factor in the generation of demand for a separate state. Discuss. (200 words) (2013) 10

Secularism & Communalism

- Discuss the impact of post-liberal economy on ethnic identity and communalism. (250 words) (2023) 15
- Are tolerance, assimilation and pluralism the key elements in the making of an Indian form of Secularism? Justify your answer. (250 words) (2022) 15
- What are the challenges to our cultural practices in the name of secularism? (150 words) (2019) 10
- How the Indian concept of secularism is different from the western model of secularism? Discuss. (Answer in 150 words) (2018) 10
- ‘Communalism arises either due to power struggle or relative deprivation. Argue by giving suitable illustrations. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- Distinguish between religiousness/religiosity and communalism giving one example of how the former has got transformed into the latter in independent India. (250 words) (2017) 15
- How do the Indian debates on secularism differ from the debates in the West? (2014) 10

GSII: Social Issues

Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

- “Development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable, by its nature, are discriminatory in approach.” Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer. (250 words) (2023) 15



- Reforming the government delivery system through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) is a progressive step, but it has limitations too. Comment. (150 words) (2022) 10
- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 remains only a legal document without intense sensitisation of government functionaries and citizens regarding disability. Comment. (150 words) (2022) 10
- Do you agree with the view that increasing dependence on donor agencies for development reduces the importance of community participation in the development process? Justify your answer. (250 words) (2022) 15
- “Besides being a moral imperative of a Welfare State, primary health structure is a necessary precondition of sustainable development.” Analyze. (150 words) (2021) 10
- “Earn while you learn scheme needs to be strengthened to make vocational education and skillful training meaningful.” Comment. (150 words) (2021) 10
- Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process – Discuss. (2019) 15
- Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss. (2017) 10
- Is the National Commission for Women able to strategise and tackle the problems that women face at both public and private spheres? Give reasons in support of your answer. (2017) 15
- Examine the main provisions of the National Child Policy and throw light on the status of its implementation. (2016) 12.5
- Do government’s schemes for up-lifting vulnerable and backward communities by protecting required social resources for them, lead to their exclusion in establishing businesses in urban economies? (2014) 12.5
- The Central Government frequently complains on the poor performance of the State Governments in eradicating suffering of the vulnerable sections of the society. Restructuring of Centrally sponsored schemes across the sectors for ameliorating the cause of vulnerable sections of population aims at providing flexibility to the States in better implementation. Critically evaluate. (2013) 10
- The basis of providing urban amenities in rural areas (PURA) is rooted in establishing connectivity. Comment. (2013) 10

Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources

- The crucial aspect of development process has been the inadequate attention paid to Human Resource Development in India. Suggest measures that can address this adequacy. (150 words) (2023) 10
- Skill development programs have succeeded in increasing human resources supply to various sectors. In the context of the statement analyze the linkages between education, skill and employment. (250 words) (2023) 15
- The rights of Children to Free and Compulsory Education, 2009 remains inadequate in promoting incentive-based system for children’s education without generating awareness about the importance of schooling. Analyse. (250 words) (2022) 15 marks
- Has digital illiteracy, particularly in rural areas, coupled with lack of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility hindered socio-economic development? Examine with justification. (250 words) (2021) 15
- In order to enhance the prospects of social development, sound and adequate health care policies are needed particularly in the fields of geriatric and maternal health care. Discuss. (2020) 10
- National Education Policy 2020 is in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goal-4 (2030). It intends to restructure and reorient education system in India. Critically examine the statement. (2020) 15
- Appropriate local community-level healthcare intervention is a prerequisite to achieve ‘Health for All’ in India. Explain. (2018) 10

- ‘To ensure effective implementation of policies addressing water, sanitation and hygiene needs, the identification of beneficiary segments is to be synchronized with the anticipated outcomes’. Examine the statement in the context of the WASH scheme. (2017) 10
- “Demographic Dividend in India will remain only theoretical unless our manpower becomes more educated, aware, skilled and creative.” What measures have been taken by the government to enhance the capacity of our population to be more productive and employable? (2016) 12.5
- Professor Amartya Sen has advocated important reforms in the realms of primary education and primary health care. What are your suggestions to improve their status and performance? (2016) 12.5
- The quality of higher education in India requires major improvements to make it internationally competitive. Do you think that the entry of foreign educational institutions would help improve the quality of technical and higher education in the country? Discuss. (2015) 12.5
- Public health system has limitations in providing universal health coverage. Do you think that private sector could help in bridging the gap? What other viable alternatives would you suggest? (2015) 12.5
- Should the premier institutes like IITs/IIMs be allowed to retain premier status, allowed more academic independence in designing courses and also decide mode/criteria of selection of students. Discuss in light of the growing challenges. (2014) 12.5
- Identify the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are related to health. Discuss the success of the actions taken by the Government for achieving the same. (2013) 10

Issues relating to poverty and hunger

- Besides the welfare schemes India needs deft management of inflation and unemployment to serve the poor and the underprivileged sections of the society. Discuss. (250 words) (2022) 15
- Discuss the main objectives of population education and point out the measure to achieve them in India in detail. (250 words) (2021) 15
- “The incidence and intensity of poverty are more important in determining poverty based on income alone”. In this context analyze the latest United Nations Multidimensional Poverty Index Report. (2020) 15
- There is a growing divergence in the relationship between poverty and hunger in India. The shrinking of social expenditure by the government is forcing the poor to spend more on Non- Food essential items squeezing their food – budget. Elucidate. (2020) 10
- How far do you agree with the view that the focus on lack of availability of food as the main cause of hunger takes the attention away from ineffective human development policies in India? (2018) 15
- “Poverty Alleviation programs in India remain mere showpieces until and unless they are backed up by political will.” Discuss with reference to the performance of the major poverty alleviation program in India. (2017) 15
- Hunger and Poverty are the biggest challenges for good governance in India still today. Evaluate how far successive governments have progressed in dealing with these humongous problems. Suggest measures for improvement. (2017) 10
- Though there have been several different estimates of poverty in India, all indicate reduction in poverty levels over time. Do you agree? Critically examine with reference to urban and rural poverty indicators. (2015) 12.5
- The concept of Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme is almost a century old in India with early beginnings in Madras Presidency in pre-independent India. The scheme has again been given impetus in most states in the last two decades. Critically examine its twin objectives, latest mandates and success. (2013) 10



Previous Year Questions

Scan the QR code to download the soft copy of syllabus-wise segregated PYQs from 2013–2023 (Social Issues).













WEEKLY FOCUS- SOCIAL ISSUES

S. No.	Topic	Lean More
1.	Social Media and Society	
2.	Unpaid Work: Women's Responsibility or an Economic Activity?	
3.	India's Vaccination Drives: Strategy, Obstacles and Opportunities	
4.	Universal Immunisation Towards A Healthier And A Safer World	
5.	Civil Society In India: Necessary Ingredient in development or a Contested Idea?	
6.	Violence against Women: Recognize, Respond, Prevent and Change	
7.	Forced Displacement: A Humanitarian Crisis and a Development Challenge	
8.	Philosophical Foundations of Education	
9.	School Education: Mind is a Tabula Rasa	
10.	Higher Education in India: The Cornerstone of our Future	
11.	Sports in India- Olympics and beyond	





S. No.	Topic	Lean More
12.	Protection of Child Rights: An unfinished agenda?	
13.	Tribals in India- Charting a Development Path	
14.	India's Third Gender: From recognition to emancipation	
15.	Towards Empowered Ageing in India	
16.	Universal Health Coverage: What, Why and How?	
17.	Sexual and Reproductive Health: Reality For All	
18.	Investing in Future Cities: Building Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Urbanscapes	
19.	Suicides: An Emerging Social Problem in India	
20.	Indian Traditional Medicine: Gifting Holistic Wellness to the World	
21.	Social Identities and Structural Transformation in India	
22.	Changing Dynamics of Family Structure in India	


10. APPENDIX







APPENDIX	
Topics	Legal provisions/ Data/ Judgments/ Initiatives
 <p>Marriage</p>	<p>Laws governing marriages in India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 ▪ Special Marriage Act, 1954 ▪ Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
 <p>Live-in relationships</p>	<p>Important Judicial Pronouncements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lalita Toppo vs The State of Jharkhand (2018): Applicability of Domestic Violence Act, 2005 with respect to the live-in-partner ▪ Indra Sarma v. VKV Sarma (2013): Mutual live-in relationship is not an offense.
 <p>Secularism</p>	<p>Constitutional Provisions in India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Word "Secular" added in the Preamble (42nd Amendment, 1976) ▪ Fundamental Rights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 15 and 16: Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion. • Articles 25-28: Right to freedom of Religion. ▪ Article 325 and 326: Non-discrimination among citizens in the area of voting and representation on the basis of religion. ▪ S. R. Bommai vs. Uoi Judgment (1994): Secularism is part of the Basic Structure of the Constitution.
 <p>Women in Workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Female labor force participation increased from 23.3% (2017) to 37% (2022-23). (PLFS) ▪ Wage disparity as men in India capture 82% of labour income (World Inequality Report 2022) ▪ Women constitute 13.76% of entrepreneurs in India. ▪ Contribution to GDP by Women is 17% in India, as against global average of 37%. ▪ Gender equality would increase India's annual GDP growth by 1.4%. (McKinsey report) ▪ Legal provisions: Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (2013), Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act (2017), Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) (2020), etc. ▪ Schemes/initiatives: Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK), National Crèche Scheme, SDG 5 (Gender Equality).
 <p>Menstrual Hygiene</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only 78% of women aged 15-24 years use hygienic menstrual protection. ▪ 23 million girls drop out annually due to lack of proper facilities. (2014 report by an NGO)





 <p>Women in STEM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Global STEM Workforce: Women make up 29.2% in STEM, despite being 49.3% in non-STEM jobs (Global Gender Gap Report 2023).▪ India's STEM Graduates: India leads with 42.6% women STEM graduates but only 27% in STEM jobs (World Bank).▪ Initiatives: Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) Policy, 2013, Women in Science and Engineering-KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN) , Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI) programme, etc.
 <p>Care Economy (Purple Economy)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Public expenditure on care economy is less than 1% of GDP.▪ Globally, 249 million women and 132 million men comprised care workforce.▪ About 76.2% of the total amount of unpaid care work is performed by women.
 <p>Violence against women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Crimes against women rose 4% in 2022 as compared to 2021.▪ 13,479 cases were registered under the Dowry Prohibition Act.▪ Legal provisions: Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, etc.▪ Schemes: Fast Track Special Courts, Nirbhaya Fund, One Stop Centres, Sexual Harassment electronic Box (She-Box), Mission Shakti- Sambal and Samarthya, etc.▪ International Measures: UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993).
 <p>Child marriage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Child marriage in girls declined from 49.4% in 1993 to 22.3% in 2021. (Lancet)▪ 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 6 boys are still married below the legal age of marriage.▪ Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra (in decreasing order) accounted for more than 50% of child marriages in girls.▪ Sustainable Development Goal target 5.3 aims to end child marriage in girls by 2030.▪ Legal provisions: Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006), Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act (2012), Prohibition of Child Marriage Amendment (PCMA) Bill, 2021, etc.▪ Jaya Jaitley committee (2020) recommended increasing the age of marriage for females to 21 from 18.
 <p>Child Labour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Globally, 7.3% of children are engaged in child labour.▪ In India, 10.1 million Children engaged in labour. (Census 2011)▪ 80% of child labour found in rural areas.▪ 62.8% of child labour is engaged in hazardous work.▪ Constitutional Provisions: Article 24 (Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.), Article 23 (Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour), Article 39(e) (Directs the state to ensure that the tender age of children is not abused).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legal Provisions: Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act (1986), Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005: Establishes National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009), Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (2015), etc. ▪ Government initiatives: National Policy on Child Labour (1987), National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme, 1988 (Now merged with Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan since 2021), PENCIL (Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour) portal, etc. ▪ Global Measures: UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959), UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989), Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 (to end all forms of child labour by 2025).
 <p>Indigenous people</p>	<p>Constitutional Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Article 342: Notification of STs ▪ Schedule V and VI (Article 244) ▪ Article 275: Grant of special funds for promoting the welfare of STs ▪ Article 338A: National Commission for STs <p>Legislative Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 ▪ Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 ▪ SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 <p>Government Schemes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Panchasheel Principles for Tribal Development ▪ Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) ▪ Pradhan Mantri Vanbandhu Vikas Yojana ▪ Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojna (PMAAGY) ▪ Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)
 <p>PVTGs</p>	<p>Criteria for identifying PVTGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-agricultural level of technology • Low level of literacy • Economic backwardness • A declining or stagnant population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently, there are 75 PVTGs spread over 18 states and the UT of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. ▪ Odisha houses highest number (13) of PVTGs in India.
 <p>Transgenders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NALSA vs Uol (2014): Legal Recognition for Transgender Persons as 'Third Gender'. ▪ K.S. Puttaswamy vs Uol (2017): Recognition of the right to sexual orientation as an aspect of privacy. ▪ Navtej Singh Johar vs Uol (2018): Decriminalization of Homosexuality ▪ Deepika Singh vs Central Administrative Tribunal (2022): Atypical families such as unmarried or queer relationships are also entitled to equal protection of law (under Article 14). ▪ Supriyo @ Supriya Chakraborty vs Union of India case unanimously refused to accord legal recognition to marriages between persons of the same sex. ▪ Other measures: National Council for Transgender Persons, Garima Greh, National Portal on Transgender Persons, etc.

 <p>Senior care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In India, senior citizens (people aged 60 years and above) currently comprise around 10% of population. 78% of elderly population survives without pension. Only 18% of seniors are covered by Health insurance. <p>Constitutional provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 41: State shall make effective provision for securing right to work, education, and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness, and disablement, etc. 7th Schedule: Item No. 9 of State List and item 20, 23 & 24 of Concurrent List relates to old age pension, social security and social insurance, and economic and social planning. <p>Other measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 41: State shall make effective provision for securing right to work, education, and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness, and disablement, etc. 7th Schedule: Item No. 9 of State List and item 20, 23 & 24 of Concurrent List relates to old age pension, social security and social insurance, and economic and social planning.
 <p>PwD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.21% of the total population is disabled persons. (Census 2011) 55% of disabled are illiterate. Initiatives: Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act (2016), ADIP Scheme (Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/ Fitting of Aids and Appliances), Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS), National Fund for PwDs, Accessible India Campaign, etc. International cooperation: Convention on Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Biwako Millennium Framework and Adoption of Incheon Strategy.
 <p>ECCE</p>	<p>Legal and Policy Framework for ECCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 45: Directs the State to provide ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years. Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009: Provides that appropriate government may make necessary arrangements for pre-school education. National Education Policy, 2020: Recommended a sub-framework for 0-3 years old under National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for ECCE <p>Other measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navchetna- National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation for Children (2024) from Birth to Three Years, Aadharshila- National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education 2024, ICDS, Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi, etc. Global initiatives: Global Partnership Strategy (GPS) for Early Childhood established by UNESCO, SDG4 (Quality Education for all), etc.
 <p>School Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross Enrolment Ratio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary: 100.13% (UDISE+) Secondary: 79.56% (UDISE+) Dropout rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary: 1.45% (UDISE+) Secondary: 12.62% (UDISE+)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mean years of schooling: 6.7 years. (UNDP's Global Human Development Index Report 2021) ▪ Education expenditure for 2020-21 was 4.64% of GDP, still short of the 6% target under NEP 2020. ▪ About 25% of 14-18 year-old rural youth still cannot read a Standard II level text fluently in their regional language. (ASER, 2023)
 <p>Implementation of NEP in Higher Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) to reach at least 50% by 2035. ▪ Multiple entry and exit options ▪ Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs) ▪ Internationalization of education ▪ National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) is established as a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning. ▪ National Research Foundation (NRF)
 <p>Education in Regional Languages</p>	<p>Policy and Legal Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Article 350A of the Constitution: Provides for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups. ▪ Right to Education Act 2009: As far as possible the medium of instruction in education should be in the mother tongue. ▪ National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the mother tongue/ regional language. <p>Other Initiatives: Anuvadini (AI-based App), e-KUMBH Portal, Natural Language Translation Mission, etc.</p>
 <p>Healthcare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government Health Expenditure: ~1.35% of GDP (41.41% of Total Health Expenditure) (2019-20) ▪ Out-of-pocket expenses (OOPE): 47.1% of the total health expenditure (2019-20) ▪ Health insurance coverage: 41% of households with any usual member covered under a health insurance. (NFHS-5) ▪ Total Fertility Rate (TFR): 2.0 (NFHS-5) ▪ Under-five mortality rate (U5MR): 41.9 (NFHS-5) ▪ Infant mortality rate (IMR): 35.2 (NFHS-5) ▪ Neonatal mortality rate (NMR): 24.9 (NFHS-5) ▪ Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR): 97 per 1 Lakh Live births 2018-20 (Economic Survey 2022-23) ▪ Institutional birth: 88.6% (NFHS-5) ▪ Low doctor to patient ratio: 1:834 (including both allopathic doctors AYUSH doctors) (1:1000 prescribed by the WHO) ▪ Geographical inequality: Around 2/3rd population in rural areas, yet 73% of the public hospital beds in urban areas.
 <p>UHC</p>	<p>Dimensions of UHC: Access to health services, Financial Risk Protection, Quality of Services.</p> <p>Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ayushman Bharat Yojana: Holistic health interventions at all levels. ▪ Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission: Equitable access via technology. ▪ National Health Policy 2017: Affordable, quality healthcare for all.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intensified Mission Indra Dhanush: Immunization for zero-dose children and pregnant women.
 <p>Digital Health</p>	<p>Government Initiatives to promote Digital Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM): Integrated digital health infrastructure ▪ Covid Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) system: Digital COVID vaccine distribution ▪ eSanjeevani: National telemedicine service ▪ Poshan Didi: Chatbot-based nutrition counseling ▪ Nikshay 2.0 portal: Community support for TB patients ▪ Telemental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele-MANAS): Free tele-mental health services.
 <p>Mental healthcare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10.6% of adults in India suffer from mental disorders. ▪ Treatment gap for mental disorders ranged between 70 to 92% for different disorders. (National Mental Health Survey 2015-16). ▪ Key initiatives to deal with the issue of Mental illness: KIRAN Helpline, Tele MANAS, Mental Health Care Act, 2017, National Mental Health Programme, Manodarpan.
 <p>Palliative care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the WHO, 56.8 million people need palliative care which would be doubled by 2060. ▪ In India, only 1-2% of people in need of palliative care are able to access it. ▪ National Programme for Palliative Care (NPPC) 2012 under NHM
 <p>Global Hunger Index (GHI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ India ranked 111 out of 125 countries with GHI score of 28.7 and is categorized as Serious on GHI Severity of Hunger Scale. ▪ South Asia and Africa South of the Sahara regions have the highest hunger levels. ▪ Government initiatives to tackle hunger: National Food Security Act (NFSA) (2013), Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), POSHAN Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission), POSHAN Tracker, Eat Right Movement, etc.
 <p>Population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ India is the world's most populous country. ▪ India has around 17% of population but only 2.45% of the global surface area and 4% of the water resources. ▪ IMR has decreased from 40.7 in 2015-16 to 35.2 in 2019-21. ▪ Increasing Life expectancy at birth: reached to 69.7 years in the 2015-19 period from 31 in 1947. ▪ Measures taken by India for population control: National Programme for Family Planning (1952), National Population Policy 2000, Mission Pari-var Vikas, India Family Planning 2030 vision document, etc.
 <p>Youth development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demographic dividend: India is one of the youngest countries in world with an average age of 29 years. ▪ Initiatives: Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan, PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL), Startup India, Khelo India, etc.

 <p>Manual Scavenging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 714 out of 766 districts in the country have reported themselves as manual scavenging-free. (2023)▪ Constitutional provisions: Articles 15 (Prohibition of discrimination), 17 (Abolition of untouchability), 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty), etc.▪ Legal Provisions: Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013), SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989▪ Safai Karamchari vs Union of India case (2014): Supreme Court ruled that manual scavenging is in blatant violation of Article 17.▪ Initiatives: National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC), National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE), Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan, etc.▪ International conventions: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Convention for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, etc.
 <p>Migration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Internal migration: 75.9 million individuals were living in internal displacement at the end of 2023, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) report.▪ About 80% of seasonal migrant children in major destinations lack access to education near work sites▪ Marriage (81%) is the leading reasons for migration of women.▪ 3/4th of migrant women are unemployed, approximately 14% of migrant women are in self and wage-employed jobs and approximately 12% are in casual labour. (PLFS)▪ Initiatives taken for betterment of Internal Migrants: National policy for rehabilitation and resettlement 2007, Enhancing accessibility to welfare schemes like 'One Nation One Ration Card', Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana 2.0, Ayushman Bharat, etc.
 <p>Urbanization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Urban population: 36% (World Bank, 2023)▪ Future projections on urbanization: 40% population by 2036 (World Bank)▪ Contribution to GDP: ~60% (NITI Aayog, 2022)▪ Urban slums constitute around 49% of urban population. (World Bank, 2020)▪ Initiatives for sustainable urbanization: AMRUT, Smart Cities Mission, etc.
 <p>Social isolation and loneliness</p>	<p>World Health Organization has declared loneliness a pressing global health threat and has initiated an international commission focused on tackling loneliness.</p> <p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Health Risks with about a 50% increased risk of dementia, 29% increased risk of heart disease and 32% increased risk of stroke.▪ Loneliness costs US economy an estimated \$406 billion a year.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Suicide rate has increased to 12.4 per 1 Lakh - the highest rate ever recorded in India.▪ Suicide rate among Indian women and girls is twice that of global average. (Lancet)



Suicide

- **Age-group 18-45 years** remains most vulnerable and **accounted for around 2/3rd of the suicides in 2021.**

Steps taken for suicide prevention

- **Legal framework:** Decriminalization of suicide attempt under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (2023) and Mental Healthcare Act (2017).
- **Policies and Programs:** National Suicide Prevention Strategy (2022), National Mental Health Policy (2014), National Palliative Care Programme, UMMEED guidelines by Ministry of Education, Manodarpan, KIRAN Helpline, etc.



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