



# SOCIAL ISSUES

**Classroom Study Material**

(May 2019 to February 2020)



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# 1. WOMEN AND CHILDREN

## 1.1. GLOBAL GENDER GAP REPORT 2020

### Why in News?

Recently, World Economic Forum released Global Gender Gap Report, 2020.

#### World Economic Forum

- It was established in 1971 as a not-for-profit foundation and is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- It is the **International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation** and the Forum engages the foremost political, business and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

### About the report

- It was first introduced in 2006.
- Global Gender Gap Report, 2020 benchmarks 153 countries on their progress towards gender parity across **four thematic dimensions**:
  - Economic Participation and Opportunity
  - Educational Attainment
  - Health and Survival, and
  - Political Empowerment.
- In addition, this year's report examines gender gap prospects in the professions of the future.

### Performance of India

- India **slipped four places to 112th rank** and has closed two-thirds of its overall gender gap (score of 66.8%).
- While India has **improved in political empowerment, it has fallen in other three indicators**.
- India is the only country among the 153 countries studied where **the economic gender gap is larger than the political one**.
- Widening of Health and survival gap is mainly due to **abnormally low sex ratios at birth** in India (91 girls for every 100 boys), violence against women, forced marriages and discrimination in access to health.
- The trend is more positive in terms of gender gaps in education.
  - From primary to tertiary education, the share of women attending school is systematically larger than the share of men.
  - However only 66% of women are literate compared with 82% of men.

## BANGLADESH TOPS THE SUBCONTINENT ON GENDER EQUALITY

### Overall Gender Gap Index

Global Top 5		India and its neighbours		
	Score	Rank	Country	Score
Iceland	<b>0.877</b>	50	Bangladesh	<b>0.726</b>
Norway	<b>0.842</b>	89	China	<b>0.676</b>
Finland	<b>0.832</b>	101	Nepal	<b>0.68</b>
Sweden	<b>0.82</b>	102	Sri Lanka	<b>0.68</b>
Nicaragua	<b>0.804</b>	112	India	<b>0.668</b>
		131	Bhutan	<b>0.635</b>
		151	Pakistan	<b>0.564</b>



**99.5 years** | Time to close overall gender gap in scenario as assessed by 2020 Gender Gap report. This is almost 10 years less than that measured in the last edition

Sub Index	India rank
Political Empowerment	18
Health and survival	150
Educational Attainment	112
Economic participation and opportunity	149

## 1.2. SDG GENDER INDEX

### Why in news?

A new index, SDG Gender Index, was launched to measure global gender equality, ranked India at 95th among 129 countries.

### About the SDG Gender Index

- It has been developed by **Equal Measures 2030**, a joint effort of regional and global organisations including African Women's Development and Communication Network, Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Plan International and International Women's Health Coalition.
- It includes **51 gender specific indicators** across **14 of the 17 official Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** that cover aspects such as poverty, health, education, political representation etc.
- The overall index scores are based on a **scale of 0–100**. A score of 100 indicates the achievement of gender equality in relation to the underlying indicators.

### Key findings for India

- India ranks toward the **bottom of the Asia and the Pacific region**, ranking 17th out of the 23 Asia and the Pacific countries covered by the index and its **score of 56.2** means that it falls in the very poor category.
  - India's **highest goal scores** are on primary education, health, hunger & nutrition, and energy.
  - Its **lowest goal scores** are on, proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments, partnerships, in the bottom 10 countries worldwide), industry, infrastructure and innovation, and climate.

## 1.3. NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE REVIEW OF BEIJING +25

### Why in news?

To mark **25 years of adoption of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA)**, Ministry of Women & Child Development (MoWCD), **National Commission for Women (NCW)** and **UN Women** organized a National Consultation on Review of Beijing +25.

### About Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)

- BPfA was adopted in **Fourth World Conference on Women (1995)**.
  - **1995 Fourth World Conference on Women**, held in **Beijing**, was one of the largest gatherings of the United Nations, and a critical turning point in the world's focus on **gender equality and the empowerment of women**.
  - **United Nations has organized four world conferences (WC)** on women. Three others are First WC in Mexico City (1975), Second WC in Copenhagen (1980) and Third WC in Nairobi (1985).
- BPfA sets **strategic objectives and actions for advancement of women** and achievement of gender equality in **12 critical areas of concern**.
- Worldwide progress in implementation of BPfA is reviewed every five years by **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**.
  - **CSW** is a functional commission of **UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** and principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to promotion of gender equality and women empowerment.
- The platform is **not a legally binding document**, but rather a guide for the U.N.

governments and non-governmental organizations.

- It for the first time facilitated the **“persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl child”**, getting included as a separate critical area of concern addressing issues such as **child marriage, female infanticide, genital mutilation and prenatal sex selection**.

### About National Commission for Women (NCW)

- It is the **statutory body established in 1992** under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.
- The commission will consist of one Chairperson, who is committed to the cause of women, five members from various fields and a member secretary.
- All the **members of the commission are nominated by the Central Government**.
- **Mandate of commission**
  - safeguard of rights of women granted by the constitution and laws,
  - study problems faced by women in the current day and make recommendations to eradicate these problems,
  - evaluating the status of Indian women from time to time and
  - funding and fighting cases related to women's rights violations.

### About UN Women:

- It is the United Nations entity, established in 2010, **dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women**.
- It works globally to make the vision of the **Sustainable Development Goals** a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life.

## 1.4. LAWS RELATED TO PROTECTION OF WOMEN

### 1.4.1. MUSLIM WOMEN (PROTECTION OF RIGHTS ON MARRIAGE) ACT, 2019

#### Why in news?

President gave assent to the **Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act 2019**. It will replace the **Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986** enacted after the Shah Bano Case (1985).

#### Major Provisions of the 2019 Act:

- It **invalidates the practice of instant triple talaq (talaq-e-biddat) as void and illegal**.
- It makes **instant triple talaq a criminal offence** with imprisonment up to three years and fine.
- It provides to **make the offence cognizable**, if information relating to the commission of an offence is given to the Police, by the married Muslim woman upon whom talaq is



pronounced or by any person related to her by blood or marriage

- A **cognizable offence** is one for which a police officer **may arrest an accused person without warrant**.
- The Act also provides **scope for reconciliation** without undergoing the process of **Nikah Halala** if the two sides agree to stop legal proceedings and settle the dispute.
- **Allowance:** A Muslim woman against whom talaq has been declared, is entitled to seek subsistence allowance from her husband for herself and for her dependent children. The amount of the allowance will be determined by the **Magistrate**.
- **Custody:** A Muslim woman against whom such talaq has been declared, is entitled to seek custody of her minor children. The manner of custody will be determined by the **Magistrate**.

#### Changes made from the Original Bill of 2017

- The Act makes the **offence cognisable** only if the woman, or one related to her by blood or marriage, against whom triple talaq has been pronounced, files a police complaint.
- Second, **the offence has been made compoundable**, that is, the parties can settle the matter between themselves.
- And third, it provides **that a magistrate may grant bail to the husband after hearing the wife**.

#### Various forms of Talaq/Separation

- In the practice of **Instant triple talaq (talaq-e-biddat)**, when a man pronounces talaq thrice in a sitting, or through phone, or writes in a talaqnama or a text message, the divorce is considered immediate and irrevocable, even if the man later wishes to re-conciliate.
  - The only way for the couple to go back to living together is through a **Nikah Halala**, and then return to her husband.
- **“Talaq-ul-sunnat”:** Under this, once the husband pronounces talaq, the wife has to observe a three-month iddat period during which the husband can arbitrate and re-conciliate with the wife. In case of cohabitation between the couple, during these three months, the talaq is revoked.
  - However, when the period of iddat expires and the husband does not revoke the talaq, the talaq is irrevocable and final.
  - It is considered to be the ideal form of dissolution of marriage contract among Muslims.
- **Nikah Halala:** refers to practice under which a divorced Muslim woman has to marry another man and consummate the marriage and get a divorce. Only then can she be eligible to remarry her former husband.

## 1.4.2. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

### Why in News?

Recently Supreme Court held that even the **brother-in-law has a liability to pay maintenance to a victim under the Domestic Violence Act** if they had lived together under the same roof in a **shared household** as part of a joint family at any point of time.

### The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005(PWDVA):

- PWDVA enshrines principles of the **UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**, which India ratified in 1993.

### Key provisions

- **Definition of domestic violence:** The Act expanded to include not just physical, but also **verbal, emotional, sexual and economic violence**.
  - The law is broad in its definition— **“domestic relationship” includes married women, mothers, daughters and sisters**.
  - This law **also protects women in live-in relationships**, as well as family members including mothers, grandmothers, etc.
  - The Act, however, excludes abuses pertaining to martial rape.
- **Protection against domestic violence:** Under this law, women can seek financial compensation and they can get maintenance from their abuser in case they are living apart.
  - It provides the **Right to Secure Housing** i.e. right to reside in the matrimonial or shared household, whether or not she has any title or rights in the household. This right is secured by a residence order, which is passed by a court.
  - A magistrate can pass a protection order under the Act to ensure the abuser doesn't contact or get close to the survivor.
- **Punishment:** of one-year maximum imprisonment and Rs. 20,000 each or both to the offenders is mentioned.
- **Protection officer:** It provides for **appointment of protection officers and NGOs** to help the woman for medical examination, legal aid and safe shelter.
- **Exclusion of liability of informant:** Any person who has reason to believe that an act of domestic violence has been, or is being, or is likely to be committed, may give information about it to the concerned Protection Officer.

#### Other Important judgments on Domestic Violence Act, 2005

- The Supreme Court has upheld a ruling that the Domestic Violence Act, intended to **safeguard women against marital abuse, will apply even after divorce.**
- The Supreme Court has also struck down the words “adult male” from the pertinent provision in the DV Act to lay down that **a woman can also file a complaint against another woman, accusing her of domestic violence.**
- The Delhi High Court has ruled that granting maintenance under the Domestic Violence Act was not dependent upon the expression "unable to maintain herself". **Maintenance doesn't depend on wife's earning.**

#### Other related law

- **The Dowry Prohibition Act:** This is a criminal law that punishes the taking and giving of dowry. Under this law, if someone takes, gives or even demands dowry, they can be imprisoned for six months or they can be fined up to Rs 5,000.
- **Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code:** This is a criminal law, which applies to husbands or relatives of husbands who are cruel to women. Recently, the Supreme Court restored an immediate arrest provision in Section 498A, IPC.

### 1.4.3. HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE

#### Why in news?

Recently Supreme Court held that Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act was enacted to provide protection against sexual harassment of women at workplace as well as for prevention and redressal of such complaints.

#### The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

- It seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at their place of work. The **Act defines sexual harassment at the workplace** and creates a mechanism for redressal of complaints.
- The definition of “aggrieved woman,” who will get protection under the Act, is extremely wide to **cover all women**, irrespective of their age or employment status and whether in the organized or unorganized sectors, public or private, and covers clients, customers and **domestic workers** as well.
- The Act covers **concepts of quid pro quo harassment** and hostile work environment as forms of sexual harassment if they occur in connection with an act or behaviour of sexual harassment.

- An **internal complaint committee (ICC)** is **mandatory** in every private or public organisation that has 10 or more employees.
- The Internal Complaints Committee has been given **powers of a civil court** for summoning, discovery and production of documents etc.
- Each Internal Committee requires membership from an NGO or association committed to the cause of women.
- A **‘Local Complaints Committee’** is required to be constituted in every district by the respective State government (which will receive complaints from organizations having less than 10 workers or if the complaint is against the employer himself).
  - An **additional ‘Local Complaints Committee’** shall also be constituted at the **block level.**
- It also provides **safeguards against false** or malicious charges.

### 1.5. BILLS RELATED TO REPRODUCTIVE RIGHT OF WOMEN

#### 1.5.1. MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020

#### Why in News?

Recently, Cabinet has approved **Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020** for amending Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971.

#### Salient features of proposed amendments

- It proposes requirement for opinion of **one registered medical practitioner (RMP) for termination of pregnancy, up to 20 weeks** of gestation and introducing the requirement of opinion of **two medical practitioner for termination of pregnancy of 20-24 weeks of gestation.**
- **Enhancing the upper gestation limit from 20 to 24 weeks** for special categories of women including survivors of rape, victims of incest (Sexual relations between close relative) and other vulnerable women (like differently-abled women, Minors) etc.
- **Limit of 24 weeks for termination of pregnancy will not apply in cases of substantial foetal abnormalities** diagnosed by the Medical Board. The composition, functions and other details of the Medical Board will be prescribed.

- Name and other particulars of a woman whose pregnancy has been terminated shall not be revealed except to a person authorized in any law for the time being in force.
- Relaxing the contraceptive-failure condition for “any woman or her partner” from the present provision for “only married woman or her husband”, allowing them to medically terminate the pregnancy.

**Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971**

- It provides for grounds of abortion:**
  - Where there is a risk that if child is born, it would suffer from physical and mental abnormalities.
  - Where pregnancy can be a threat to life of women or would cause grave physical and mental injury to her.
  - Where pregnancy caused due to rape or due to the failure of contraceptive methods.
- It provides for criteria for approval at different stages:**
  - In the first 12 weeks with the approval of one Registered Medical Practitioner (RMP).
  - Between 12-20 weeks, pregnancy can be terminated with the approval of 2 RMPs.
  - Beyond 20 weeks, termination of pregnancy is allowed only after approval of the court.
- Written consent from guardians is required for minors to access abortion.
- Failure of contraceptive methods can be stated as a reason for seeking abortion by “married women or her husband”.

**Different form of surrogacy**

- Altruistic surrogacy-** where the couple does not pay the surrogate mother any compensation other than the medical and insurance expenses related to the pregnancy.
- Commercial surrogacy-** here compensation (in cash or kind) paid to the surrogate mother, which exceeds the reasonable medical expenses associated with the pregnancy.
- Gestational surrogacy** means a practice whereby a surrogate mother carries a child for the intending couple through implantation of embryo in her womb and the child is not genetically related to the surrogate mother.

	Provisions of the Bill
<b>Altruistic vs Commercial surrogacy</b>	The present Bill proposes altruistic surrogacy and bans commercial surrogacy.
<b>who can be a surrogate mother</b>	The bill provides that the surrogate mother needs to be close relative of the intending couple.
<b>Definition of the term infertility</b>	Intending couple becomes eligible by obtaining a certificate of infertility after 5 years of not bearing a child.
<b>Period of Insurance coverage</b>	Insurance coverage for the surrogate mother is limited to 16 months only.
<b>Permission to PIO, OCI and foreigners to commission Surrogacy and Issue of single women, widows and divorcees</b>	Not allowed to commission surrogacy in India.

**1.5.2. SURROGACY (REGULATION) BILL**

**Why in News?**

Recently, Union Cabinet approved the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill after incorporating recommendations of a Rajya Sabha Select Committee.

**More in News**

- The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2016 was introduced in Lok Sabha which lapsed with the dissolution of the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha.
- The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019 was introduced in Lok Sabha to replace the 2016 Bill, got passed and then sent to the Upper House, where it was referred to select committee of Rajya Sabha for scrutiny.
- Until it clears parliament, India remains among a handful of places where paid surrogacy is legal. It was banned for foreigners in 2015.

**About Surrogacy**

- Surrogacy** is the practice whereby one woman carries the child for another with the intention that the child should be handed over after birth.

**1.6. PCPNDT ACT**

**Why in news?**

Recently, the Supreme Court upheld the provisions in the **Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act of 1994 (PCPNDT)**, which ‘criminalises’ non-maintenance of medical records by obstetricians and gynaecologists and suspends their medical licenses indefinitely.

**About the PCPNDT Act**

- The main purpose of enacting PCPNDT Act, 1994 has been to:
  - Ban the use of sex selection techniques** before or after conception
  - Prevent the misuse of pre-natal diagnostic techniques** for sex selective abortions
- Under this law, all centres which have any equipment which can potentially detect sex of foetus pre-conception or pre-natal **have to be registered** with the appropriate authorities.





- It **prohibits advertisements** in relation to such techniques for detection or determination of sex.
- The Act and Rules deal elaborately with the **maintenance and preservation of proper records**.
- The **Appropriate Authorities are empowered with the powers of Civil Court** for search, seizure and sealing the machines, equipment and records of the violators of law including sealing of premises and commissioning of witnesses.
- It was amended in 2003 to improve regulation of technology capable of sex selection.

## 1.7. POCSO ACT

### Why in news?

Ministry of Law and Justice has recently started a scheme for setting up **1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) for rape and POSCO act cases**, as a part of **National Mission for Safety of Women (NMSW)**.

### More about news

- There are **389 districts** in the country where the number of pending cases under **POCSO Act** exceeds 100. Under the recent scheme, each of these districts will have one exclusive POCSO court (FTSC) which will **be set up for one year**.
- **Financing of the Scheme** will be on the pattern of Centrally Sponsored Schemes: 60% of the share is contributed by Central Government and 40% by State & UT governments.

### Provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act

- The Act defines a **child as any person below eighteen years of age** and regards the best interests and well-being of the child as being of paramount importance at every stage, to ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.
  - **India being a party to the 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child'** is also under legal obligation to protect its children from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.
- It defines **different forms of sexual abuse**, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography, and deems a sexual assault to be "aggravated" under certain circumstances, such as when the abused child is mentally ill or when the abuse is committed by a person in a

position of trust or authority vis-à-vis the child, like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor.

- It also seeks to **establish Special Courts for speedy trial** of such offences. The Act stipulates that a case of Child Sexual Abuse must be disposed of within one year from the date the offence is reported.
- It also provides for **relief and rehabilitation of the child**, as soon as the complaint is made. The Special Juvenile Police Unit or the local police are also required to report the matter to the Child Welfare Committee within 24 hours of recording the complaint, for long term rehabilitation of the child.
- It is **gender neutral law**, wherein the law takes cognizance of sexual crimes committed against both girls and boys under the age of 18 years.
- It **does not recognize consensual sexual acts among children** or between a child and an adult. Prosecutes any person (including a child) for engaging in a sexual act with a child irrespective of whether the latter consented to it.
- Recently, Parliament passed the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, 2019 to enhance punishment for sexual offences against children, with a **provision of death penalty**.

#### Definition of child under different acts

- **POCSO Act:** Less than 18
- **Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986:** Less than 14
- **The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015:** Less than 16
- **Factories Act, 1948:** Less than 15

#### Globally laws on age of consent

- Many countries have 16 years or below that as the age of consent.
- Most of the American states, Europe, Japan, Canada, Australia, China and Russia fall into this category.

#### Related News

##### Child Well Being Index

- Recently, Child Well Being Index was **released by World Vision India (an NGO) and IFMR LEAD (a research institute in India)**.
- The score is calculated using **24 indicators divided into 3 categories** of Healthy individual development, positive relationships and protective contexts.
- Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh topped the index while Meghalaya, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh featured at the bottom.
- Among the UTs, Puducherry was best performing.

**Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS)**

- It is a **centrally sponsored scheme** aimed at building a protective environment for children in difficult circumstances, as well as other vulnerable children, through Government-Civil Society Partnership.
- It provides for **setting up of District Child Protection Societies (DCPS)** by the State Governments/ UT Administrations in every district of the State responsibility of which includes identifying families and children at risk to prevent destitution of children.
- It **aims create database and knowledge base for child protection services**, including management information system and child tracking system in the country for effective implementation and monitoring of child protection services
- It provides **financial resources to States/UT Administrations** for the effective implementation of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000.

findings, child or adoptive parent is temporarily removed from list until they can prove their preparedness again.

- **Dissolution means annulment of the adoption legally**, due to non-adjustment of child with adoptive family, after court decree for adoption has been obtained.

**Hague Adoption Convention**

- The Hague Convention of 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention) protects children and their families against the risks of illegal, irregular, premature or ill-prepared adoptions abroad.
- The Convention operates through a system of national Central Authorities and reinforces the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Art. 21) to uphold the best interest of children.
- It also **seeks to prevent the abduction, the sale of, or traffic in children.**

## 1.8. ADOPTION IN INDIA

**Why in New?**

Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) reported 246 cases of disruption and 10 cases of dissolution in adoption over the period of the last five years.

**Adoption procedure in India**

- Adoption is the permanent legal transfer of all parental rights from one person or couple to another person or couple.
  - Adoptive parents have the same rights and responsibilities as biological parents, and adopted children have all of the emotional, social, legal and kinship benefits of biological children.
- Adoption Regulations, 2017 notified by Ministry of Women and Child Development, under **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015** and subsequent **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016**, govern the adoption procedure in India.
- These provisions are in line with the **Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993** which was ratified by Government of India in 2003.

**Disruption and Dissolution**

- **Disruption means unmatching of child from adoptive family** due to non-adjustment of child with adoptive family after placement, but prior to the completion of legal process of adoption.
  - On disruption State Adoption Resource Agency holds counselling sessions with parents as well as child. Based on its

**Fundamental principles governing adoptions of children from India**

- The child's best interests shall be of paramount consideration, while processing any adoption placement.
- Preference shall be given to place the child in adoption with Indian citizens and with due regard to the principle of placement of the child in his own socio-cultural environment, as far as possible.
- All adoptions shall be registered on **Child Adoption Resource Information and Guidance System (CARINGS)** and the confidentiality of the same shall be maintained by the Authority.

**Eligibility criteria for prospective adoptive parents (PAPs)**

- The prospective adoptive parents shall be physically, mentally **and emotionally stable, financially capable and shall not have any life-threatening medical condition.**
- Any prospective adoptive parents, irrespective of his marital status and whether or not he has biological son or daughter, can adopt a child subject to following, namely:
  - the **consent of both the spouses** for the adoption shall be required, in case of a married couple;
  - a **single female** can adopt a child of any gender;
  - a **single male** shall not be eligible to adopt a girl child;
- No child shall be given in adoption to a couple unless they have at least **two years of stable marital relationship.**

## THE PROCESS OF ADOPTION

### Registration



Interested couple/single parent has to register with the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) by providing the requisite documents. The registration procedure is explained on the CARA website.

### Document transfer

Once the registration is done, the prospective adoptive parents (PAP) have to transfer their documents to the nearest adoption agency, a list of which is made available on the CARA website.



### Parental assessment



The agency will then counsel the parents and also conduct a home study. A report will be sent to CARA.

If the local agency gives a positive report, the PAP name will be added to the seniority list. As and when a child is available for adoption, the couple is notified. The PAP need to state their decision within 48 hours.



### Completion of process



If they give their consent, the couple need to go to the agency to convey their willingness. The child will be given for adoption. The adoption process is completed through a court procedure, which the agency will facilitate.

### Room for review

In case the PAP refuse to adopt the child presented to them on the website, they will be given another option within 60 days, if they are not in agreement with the second option too, they have to begin the process from scratch again.



### Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)

- It is a statutory body (under JJ Act) of Ministry of Women & Child Development.
- It functions as the nodal body for adoption of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions.
- CARA is designated as the Central Authority to deal with inter-country adoptions in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993.
- CARA primarily deals with adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children through its associated /recognised adoption agencies.

### Child Adoption Resource Information & Guidance System (CARINGS)

- It is an e-governance measure to facilitate child adoption.
- It is a centralized data bank of adoptable children and PAPs.



## 2. OTHER VULNERABLE SECTIONS

### 2.1. TRANSGENDER PERSONS (PROTECTION OF RIGHTS) ACT, 2019

#### Why in News?

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill was recently passed by the Parliament.

**NALSA v/s Union of India, 2014 case:** Framework given by supreme court regarding transgenders rights:

- The right to choose one's gender is part of the right to life and life with dignity.
- 'Third gender' to be included in all official documents/forms.
- To choose from one of the three genders was mandated to be only the person's choice.
- It provided for avenues of **reservation within the OBC quota** to this 'marginalised' section.
- It was suggested that a **commission to protect rights of this community** must be setup just like the National Commission for SC/STs.

#### Key Provisions of the Act

- **Definition of a transgender person:** The Act defines a transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth.
  - It includes trans-men and trans-women, persons with intersex variations, gender-queers, and persons with socio-cultural identities, such as kinnar and hijra.
- **Prohibition against discrimination:** The Act prohibits 8 types of discrimination against a transgender person, including denial of service or unfair treatment in relation to:
  - education;
  - employment;
  - healthcare;
  - access to public goods and facilities;
  - right to movement;
  - right to reside, rent, or own property;
  - opportunity to hold public or private office; and
  - access to a government or private establishment which has custody of a transgender person.
- **Recognition of Identity:** It provides for the **right to self-perceived gender identity**. A certificate of identity as a transgender person can be issued by **the District Magistrate**. A revised certificate can also be obtained after **Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS)**.

- **Offences and penalties:** It recognize the following offences against transgender persons. Penalties for these offences vary between six months and two years, and a fine.
  - forced or bonded labour (excluding compulsory government service for public purposes),
  - denial of use of public places,
  - removal from household, and village,
  - physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic abuse.
- **National Council for Transgender Persons** will be setup with representatives from the government, transgender community and experts in the field. It will advise the government on formulating policies for the community, and monitor the implementation, and address grievances, among others.
- **Welfare measures by the government:** Government must take steps for their rescue and rehabilitation, vocational training and self-employment, create schemes that are transgender sensitive, and promote their participation in cultural activities.
- **Health care:** The government must take steps to provide health facilities to transgender persons including **separate HIV surveillance centre** and **sex reassignment surgeries**. The government shall review medical curriculum to address health issues of transgender persons and provide comprehensive medical insurance schemes for them.

#### Issues with the bill

- **Limited right to self-identification.** Act removes the provisions for a District Screening Committee and leaves the power to issue the Certificate with the District Magistrate.
- **No review mechanism:** If a transgender person is denied a Certificate of Identity, the Act does not provide a mechanism for appeal or review of such decision of the District Magistrate.
- It **does not make provisions for affirmative action** in employment or education despite the Supreme Court mandate in NALSA Judgement.

**National Council for Transgender persons (NCT):** The NCT will consist of:

- Union Minister for Social Justice (Chairperson);
- Minister of State for Social Justice (Vice-Chairperson);
- Secretary of the Ministry of Social Justice;
- one representative from ministries including Health, Home Affairs, and Human Resources Development.

**Other members include**

- Representatives of the NITI Aayog, and the National Human Rights Commission.
- **State governments** will also be represented.
- **Five members from the transgender community and**
- **Five experts from non-governmental organisation.**

## 2.2. THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY ACT, 2016

### Why in News?

The Rights of Persons with Disability Rules, 2017 (Rules) were notified to supplement the provisions of the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016.

- In India, **persons with disability** constitute **about 2.1% of total population**. Men with disabilities constitute 56% and women with disabilities make up the rest 44%.

### Provisions of the Act

- It replaces the **Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995**.
- The Act is in line with the principles of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** and aims at encouraging establishments to have a disabled friendly workplace.
- The types of disabilities have been **increased from existing 7 to 21** and the Central Government will have the power to add more types of disabilities.
- Persons with "benchmark disabilities" are defined as those certified to have at least **40 per cent of the disabilities** mentioned in the Act.
- Additional benefits such as **reservation** in higher education, government jobs, reservation in allocation of land, poverty alleviation schemes etc. have been provided for persons with benchmark disabilities.
- Every child with benchmark disability between the **age group of 6 and 18 years shall have the right to free education**.
- **Reservation in vacancies in government establishments has been increased from 3% to 4%** for certain persons or class of persons with benchmark disability.
- It has now brought private establishments within its ambit. Though it does not require private establishments to mandatorily appoint Persons with Disabilities (PwD), there are **certain obligations imposed on private establishments under the Act**.

- Broad based Central & State Advisory Boards on Disability are to be set up to serve as apex policy making bodies at the Central and State level.
- **National and State Fund** will be created to **provide financial support** to the persons with disabilities.
- For strengthening the Prime Minister's Accessible India Campaign, stress has been given to ensure accessibility in public buildings (both Government and private) in a prescribed time-frame.
- It provides for penalties for offences committed against persons with disabilities and also violation of the provisions of the new law.
- **Special Courts** will be designated in each district to handle cases concerning violation of rights of PwDs.

### UN Convention of Rights of Persons with Disability

- Entered into force in 2008, it is the **first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century and first legally binding instrument** with comprehensive protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.
- Its guiding principles include- respect for inherent dignity, non-discrimination, participation and inclusion in society, equality of opportunity, accessibility, equality between men and women and respect for the rights of children with disabilities.
- Though the convention does not explicitly define disability, it recognizes that the notion of "disability" is not fixed and can alter, depending on the prevailing environment from society to society.
- **India has ratified the convention.**

### Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)

- It is a nation-wide flagship campaign for achieving universal accessibility enabling persons with disabilities.
- It is launched by the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)**, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- It has three important components: Built Environment Accessibility, Transportation System Accessibility and Information and Communication Eco-System Accessibility.

### Related news: National Disaster Management Guidelines on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction

- Recently, Ministry of Home Affairs released **National Disaster Management Guidelines on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR)**.
- DiDRR strives to reduce the impact of disasters on affected communities by mitigating and reducing risks.

- These guidelines provide **practical directions to support implementation mechanism of DiDRR** based on established and nationally accepted norms and practices so that all stakeholder will implement and carry forward the process.
- **Some of the guidelines are**
  - Centre should **conduct census and survey of people with disabilities** for data & resource mapping.
  - **Inclusion of issues of person with disability and their organization in disaster risk reduction activities** as stipulated in the Right of Person with Disability Act (RPWDA) 2016 has to be institutionalised.
  - **Preparedness and mitigation strategies** such as national stockpiling of durable medical equipment, life saving devices etc.
  - **Early warning system** mechanism for informing person with intellectual disability.

### 2.3. MAINTENANCE AND WELFARE OF PARENTS AND SENIOR CITIZENS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2019

#### Why in news?

Recently, the bill was introduced in Lok Sabha which seeks to amend the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007.

#### Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007

- **Children includes son, daughter, grandson and grand-daughter.**
  - **The bill expands the definition of children** to include step-children, adoptive children, children-in-laws, and the legal guardian of minor children.
- **Parents:** means father or mother whether biological, adoptive or step father or step mother.
  - **Bill** include parent-in-laws, and grandparents.
- **Relative:** means any legal heir of the childless senior citizen who is not a minor and is in possession of or would inherit his property after his death.
  - **"senior citizen"** means any person being a citizen of India, who has attained the age of sixty years or above
  - Bill include minors represented by their legal guardians.
- **Maintenance:** includes provisions for food, clothing, residence and medical attendance and treatment so that such parent may lead a normal life.

- Bill elaborate to include the provision of healthcare, safety, and security for parents and senior citizens to lead a life of dignity.
- **Maintenance orders:** The upper limit on the maintenance fee which is Rs. 10,000 in the Act.
  - Bill removes the upper limit
- **Constitution of Maintenance Tribunal:** State Government shall constitute for each Sub-division Tribunals for the purpose of adjudicating and deciding upon the order for maintenance.
- **Deposit of maintenance amount:** The children or relative who is required to pay any maintenance shall deposit the amount within thirty days of the date of announcing the order by tribunal.
  - **Bill reduced the number of days** to 15 days.
- **Appeals:** Any senior citizen or a parent, as the case may be, aggrieved by an order of a Tribunal may, within sixty days from the date of the order, prefer an appeal to the Appellate Tribunal:
  - The Bill allows children and relatives also to appeal decisions of the Tribunal.

#### Schemes by the Government for welfare of Senior Citizens

- **Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP)** to improve the quality of life of older persons by providing basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and entertainment opportunities, etc.
- **Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY)** under which aids and assistive living devices are provided to senior citizens belonging to BPL category who suffer from age-related disabilities such as low vision, hearing impairment etc.
- **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)** under which financial assistance is provided to person of 60 years and above and belonging to BPL family.
- **Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana (VPBY)** to give an assured minimum pension on a guaranteed minimum return on the subscription amount.
- **Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana** to provide social security during old age. This is a simplified version of the VPBY and is implemented by the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India.
- **Vayoshreshtha Samman** conferred as a National award, and given to eminent senior citizens & institutions under various categories for their contributions on International day of older persons.

### 2.4. MANUAL SCAVENGING

#### Why in news?

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment informed Rajya Sabha that 282 people have died while cleaning sewers and septic tanks in the country between 2016 and November 2019.



**Manual Scavenging: Related constitutional and International provisions:**

- Sanitation is a **State subject**.
- The Constitution of India, in conformity with the international position, abolishes untouchability (**Art. 17**) and prohibits caste-based discrimination (**Art. 15**).
- Under the Constitution human dignity is an inalienable right which is part of the fundamental right to life under **Art. 21**.
- It is a universally recognized right, endorsed by the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** by way of Articles 1, 22 and 23.
- **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** is responsible for rehabilitation of manual scavengers and it implements the '**Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers**'(SRMS).

**Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act 2013'**

- It intends to eliminate the insanitary latrines and survey of Manual Scavengers and their rehabilitation.
- **It prohibits employment** as Manual Scavengers, Hazardous manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.
- It thus **prohibits dry latrines and all kinds of manual cleaning** of excrement as well as cleaning gutters, sewers, and septic tanks without protective gear.
- **Under section 8 of this Act**, a person violating this will be punishable with imprisonment for up to two years or a fine of up to 12 lakh or both. For any subsequent violations, the imprisonment may extend up to five years and the fine can go up to 15 lakh or both.
- The Act also has following **provisions for the rehabilitation** of the identified manual scavengers
  - An initial one-time cash assistance
  - Scholarship to the children of manual scavenger
  - Allotment of residential plot and financial assistance for house construction of a ready built house
  - Training in a livelihood skill with payment of stipend of at least Rs 3000 per month
  - Provision for subsidy, along with concessional loans, to at least one adult member of the family.

**National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK)**

- The NCSK was constituted in 1994 as a **statutory body** by 'National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993'.
  - However, after 2004 it has been **acting as a non-Statutory body of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** whose tenure

- has been extended through Government Resolutions till March, 2022.
- It comprises of one Chairman (in the rank and status of the Union Minister for States) and four members, including a lady member (in the rank and status of the Secretary to the Government of India) and the Secretary (in the rank of Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India) along with other supporting staff.
- As per "**The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 Act**", the mandate and scope of the Commission has been enhanced to perform the following functions, namely:-
  - To monitor the implementation of the Act.
  - To **enquire into complaints regarding contravention of the provisions of the Act**, and to convey its findings to the concerned authorities with recommendations requiring further action.
  - To **advise the Central and the State Governments for effective implementation of the provisions** of the Act.
  - To **take suo motu notice** of matter relating to non-implementation of the Act.

**Related news**

- The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) in 2019 procured a **manhole-cleaning robot called 'Bandicoot'**, which would help end the practice of manual scavenging.

**2.5. DENOTIFIED, NOMADIC AND SEMI-NOMADIC COMMUNITIES**

**Why in News?**

With the implementation of National Population Register (NPR) and National Register of Citizenship (NRC), the denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Madhya Pradesh, which comprise around 7-8% of the state's population, are in fear of losing citizenship.

**Details**

- During the British colonial rule, if the local government had reason to believe that a gang or a tribe had "addicted to systematic commission of non-bailable offences", then it was registered as criminal tribe under the **Criminal Tribes Act, 1871**.
- Next came the **Criminal Tribes Act (CTA), 1924**. Under this act, the local government may establish reformatory schools and separate criminal tribe children from their parents and guardians and place them in such schools.
- **Nomadic Tribes and Denotified Tribes** both are the ones that were regarded as **criminal tribes** under CTA. Most Denotified Tribes are spread across the Scheduled Castes (SC),

Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) categories.

- After the **Ananthsayanam Ayyangar Committee** (gave a comprehensive report on how CTA worked throughout India), the CTA was repealed in August 1949 and former “criminal tribes” were **denotified** in 1952, when the Act was replaced with the **Habitual Offenders Act, 1952** of Government of India.
- In 2002, **Justice Venkatchaliah Commission** recommended for strengthening the programmes for economic and educational development of De-Notified Tribes (DNTs). It also recommended constituting a special commission to look into the needs and grievances of the DNTs.
- Consequently, a **National Commission for Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes** was constituted in 2005 under the chairmanship of **Balkrishna Sidke Renke**, to study the socio-economic conditions of these groups.
- Another National Commission for Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes chaired by **Bhiku Ramji Idate** was constituted in 2015 for a three-year period. It submitted its report viz “**Voices of the Denotified, Nomadic & Semi-Nomadic Tribes**” in 2018.
- In consonance with the recommendations of **Idate Commission**, the Union cabinet has **approved a permanent Development and Welfare Board** under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- **Various challenges faced by DNT include:** social discrimination, economic hardships, declining populations and lack of census data, large scale exclusions etc.

## 2.6. VAN DHAN VIKAS KENDRA

### Why in news?

Recently, Ministry of Tribal Affairs proposed to expand Van Dhan Vikas Kendras.

### Van Dhan Scheme (Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram)

- It is primarily a component under the **Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) & Development of Value Chain**.
- It is an initiative targeting livelihood generation for tribals by harnessing the wealth of forest i.e. Van Dhan. The programme aims to **tap into traditional knowledge & skill sets of tribals** by adding technology & IT to

upgrade it at each stage and to convert into a viable economic activity.

- Under the Van Dhan Scheme, **TRIFED will facilitate establishment of MFP-led multi-purpose Van Dhan Vikas Kendras**, a cluster of 10 SHGs comprising of 30 tribal MFP gatherers each, in the tribal areas.
- Each Kendra would act as **common facility centres** for procurement cum value addition to locally available MFPs and skill-based handicraft. Training and technical support is provided by TRIFED.
- The scheme is being implemented through **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** as Nodal Department at the Central Level and TRIFED as Nodal Agency at the National Level.
- At State level, the State Nodal Agency for MFPs and the District collectors are envisaged to play a pivot role in scheme implementation at grassroot level.
- Locally the Kendras are proposed to be managed by a Managing Committee (an SHG) consisting of representatives of Van Dhan SHGs in the cluster.
- It aims at **convergence of various schemes** and initiatives of other Central/State level departments/ agency/ institutions.
- Besides, partnership models with Banks/ PSUs/ private sector shall also be explored for their active participation and financial assistance under CSR funds.

### About TRIFED

- The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) came into existence in 1987. It is a national-level apex organization functioning under the administrative control of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India.
- The ultimate objective of TRIFED is socio-economic development of tribal people in the country by way of marketing development of the tribal products on which the lives of tribals depends heavily.

### Minor Forest Produce (MFP)

- MFP, also known as Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), is a major source of livelihood and provides nutrition, medicinal needs and cash income to a large number of STs who live in and around forests.
- **The Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce through Minimum Support Price & Development of Value chain for MFP scheme** is designed as a social safety net for improvement of livelihood of MFP gatherers by providing them fair price for the MFPs they collect.
  - The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs will be the nodal Ministry** for implementation and monitoring of the scheme. The Minimum

Support Price would be determined by the Ministry with technical help of TRIFED.

- The responsibility of purchasing MFP on MSP will be with State designated agencies.
- The scheme **supports primary value addition** as well as provides for supply chain infrastructure like cold storage, warehouses etc.
- The scheme is **applicable in all States**.

## 2.7. EKLAVYA MODEL RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

### Why in news?

More than 400 Eklavya Model Residential schools to be set up in tribal areas by 2022

### Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)

- **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** is implementing Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) in tribal areas.

- EMRS are set up in States/UTs **with grants under Article 275(1)** of the Constitution of India.
- Management of each EMRS is under a committee which include, among others, reputed local NGOs involved with education.

### Objectives of EMRS

- Provide **quality middle and high-level education to Scheduled Tribe (ST) students** in remote areas.
- Enable them to avail of reservation in high and professional educational courses and in jobs in government and public and private sectors.
- Construction of infrastructure that provides education, physical, environmental and cultural needs of student life.



### 3. EDUCATION

#### 3.1. DRAFT NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

##### Why in News?

Recently, the **committee under Dr. K. Kasturirangan** submitted its report on the **Draft National Education Policy, 2019** to the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

##### Background

- India has had two National Education Policies in 1968 and 1986 (modified in 1992) respectively.
- The vision of the **National Education Policy 2019** is to create an India centered education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high quality education to all.

##### National Policy of Education 1986 and Program of Action, 1992

- The main objective of the National Policy of Education of 1986 and Programme of Action, 1992 was to **establish a national system of education** implies that all students irrespective of caste; creed, sex, and religion have access to education of a comparable quality.

##### Objectives of National Policy of Education 1986

- In relation to Elementary Education
  - Universal access and enrolment
  - Universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and
  - A sustainable improvement in the quality education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning.
- **Secondary Education:** Effort to be made to provide computer literacy in as many secondary level institutions to make the students equipped with necessary computer skills.
- **Higher Education:** should provide to the people with an opportunity to reflect on the critical social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues.

##### Reasons for a new Education Policy

- **Changed demands of a knowledge economy-** that calls for emphasis on the need for acquisition of new skills by learners on a regular basis.
- **Narrow time lag between the generation of new knowledge and its application** specially in the fields of science and technology.
- **Small window of India's Demographic Dividend-** that is expected to last for only a little over 20 years.
- **Alignment with the global Sustainable Development Goals-** The **SDG 4** seeks to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030.

##### Key Recommendations of the Draft Policy

Area	Recommendations
<b>School Education</b>	
<b>Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop new curriculum framework-</b> by giving this task to NCERT, which consists of two parts, one for the age group of 0-3 years and other for the age group of 3-8 years.</li> <li>• <b>Strengthening of facilities-</b> through expansion and co-location of Angandwadis and pre-schools with primary schools where possible. State Governments to prepare <b>cadres of professionally qualified educators for early childhood education.</b></li> <li>• <b>Design of learning-friendly environments-</b> by a committee of cognitive scientists, early childhood education experts, artists, and architects in each state.</li> <li>• <b>Extension of the RTE Act</b> to include ECCE.</li> </ul>
<b>Foundational Literacy and Numeracy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increased focus</b> through dedicated mathematics and reading hours everyday, weekly events, special assemblies.</li> <li>• <b>Remedial Instructional Aides Programme-</b> to induct instructors from local communities to formally help students who have fallen behind.</li> <li>• <b>National Tutors Programme-</b> where the best performers in each school work as tutors during the school for fellow (generally younger) students.</li> </ul>
<b>Reintegrating Dropouts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing access gaps in infrastructure such as transport facilities, hostels and security of students and tracking out-of-school children through social workers and counselors.</li> <li>• Second-chance education programmes for long-term out-of-school adolescents</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum and Pedagogy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adopt a 5+3+3+4 design comprising:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 5 years of the <b>Foundational Stage:</b> 3 years of pre-primary school and Grades 1, 2.</li> <li>○ 3 years of the <b>Preparatory Stage:</b> Grades 3, 4, 5.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 3 years of the <b>Middle Stage</b>: Grades 6, 7, 8.</li> <li>○ 4 years of the <b>High Stage</b>: Grades 9, 10, 11, 12.</li> <li>● <b>Reduce curriculum load</b> in each subject to its essential core content, in order to make space for more holistic, experiential, discussion-based, and analysis-based learning.</li> <li>● <b>Increased flexibility in choice of subjects</b> for the students.</li> </ul>
<b>Higher Education</b>	
<b>Institutional Restructuring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Developing multidisciplinary institutions with programmes across disciplines.</li> <li>● A new institutional architecture with three kinds of institutions- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Type 1: Research universities</b>- focus equally on research and teaching</li> <li>○ <b>Type 2: Teaching universities</b>- focus primarily on high quality teaching, while also significantly contributing to cutting-edge research</li> <li>○ <b>Type 3: Colleges</b>- focus almost exclusively on the goal of high-quality teaching</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>More Liberal Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Redesigning of Undergraduate curriculum with a <b>common core curriculum</b> for all students and one/two area(s) of specialization.</li> <li>● Introduce four-year <b>undergraduate programmes in Liberal Arts</b> having multiple exit options with appropriate certification.</li> <li>● Five <b>Indian Institute of Liberal Arts</b> must be setup as model multidisciplinary liberal arts institutions.</li> </ul>
<b>Optimal Learning Environments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A <b>National Higher Education Qualifications Framework (NHEQF)</b> outlining the learning outcomes. Focus on assessment for <b>development and not judgement</b>.</li> <li>● Focus on <b>occupational readiness</b> of students and involve them in <b>institutional processes</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Establishment of a National Research Foundation</b>- to fund, mentor, incentivise, and build capacity for quality research. It will have four major divisions: sciences, technology, social sciences, and arts and humanities, with the provision to add additional divisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Education Governance and Regulation</b>	
<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Setup <b>Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog (RSA)</b> headed by the Prime Minister and <b>Rajya Shiksha Aayogs</b> headed by the Chief Ministers for developing, implementing, evaluating, and revising the vision of education.</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Setup Public School Complexes</b>- which will be clusters of public schools in a contiguous geography offering education across all stages.</li> <li>● States will <b>separate the regulatory function</b> from that of other functions in education, such as policymaking, school operations etc.</li> <li>● Setup an <b>independent State School Regulatory Authority</b> for each state that will prescribe basic uniform standards for public and private schools.</li> <li>● <b>District Education Council</b>- for oversight of the school system in each district.</li> </ul>
<b>Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All Higher Education Institutions, public and private, shall be governed by an <b>independent Board of Governors</b>, which shall be the apex body for the institution, with complete autonomy.</li> <li>● An accreditation ecosystem led by a revamped <b>National Accreditation and Assessment Council</b> to be created.</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher Management</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Merit-based scholarships</b> to encourage outstanding students to enter the teaching profession.</li> <li>● Teachers will be recruited to the district, as is done now in many States, and then deployed to the school complex, and then, as per school needs, to individual schools.</li> <li>● All “<b>para-teacher</b>” (Shikshakarmi) systems across the country will be stopped by 2022.</li> <li>● Teachers will <b>not be allowed to participate in any non-teaching activities</b> (e.g. cooking mid-day meals) during school hours that could affect their teaching capacities.</li> <li>● Teachers will be required to complete a minimum of 50 hours of <b>continuous professional development training</b> every year.</li> <li>● A similar <b>Continuous Professional Development Programme</b> should be introduced in HEIs. Also a <b>permanent employment (tenure) track system</b> should be introduced for faculty in all higher education institutions by 2030.</li> <li>● All teachers will have possible career progression paths to become <b>educational administrators</b>.</li> </ul>	
<b>Technology in Education</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>National Mission on Education through information and communication technology</b> to setup virtual laboratories that provide remote access to laboratories in various disciplines. A <b>National Educational Technology Forum</b> will also be setup under the Mission, as an autonomous body, to facilitate decision-making on the induction, deployment and use of technology.</li> <li>● <b>Integrating educational technology into the school curriculum</b>- using computational thinking (the thought processes involved in formulating problems and solutions in ways that computers can effectively execute)</li> <li>● A <b>National Repository of Educational Data</b> will be setup to maintain all records related to institutions, teachers, and students in digital form.</li> </ul>	

### 3.2. SCHOOL EDUCATION QUALITY INDEX (SEQI)

#### Why in News?

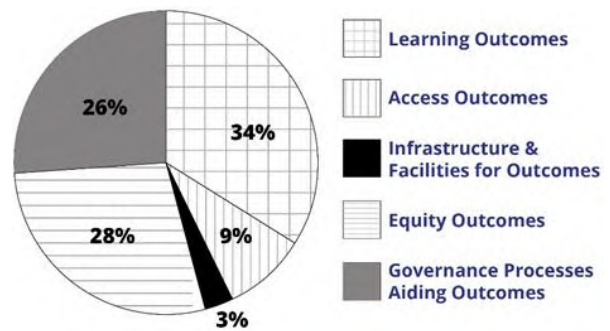
2<sup>nd</sup> edition of SEQI was recently released by NITI Aayog.

#### Relevant Constitutional provisions

- Subject of School education falls under **Concurrent list of Schedule 7** of Indian constitution. It was transferred from State list to concurrent list by **42<sup>nd</sup> constitutional amendment act, 1976**.

#### About SEQI

- It has been **developed by NITI Aayog along with Ministry of Human Resource Development, States and Union Territories (UTs), the World Bank and sector experts**.
- The index enables **sharing of knowledge and best practices** across States and UTs, and hence, fosters the spirit of **competitive and cooperative federalism**.
- **Indicators**- it comprises of **30 indicators** and are divided into two broad categories i.e.
  - **Outcomes**, that consists of learning, access like net enrolment ratio, infrastructure & facilities, and equity outcomes;
  - **Governance processes aiding outcomes**, like student and teacher attendance, quality of teachers, training, governance accountability and transparency.
- States and UTs have been categorised into **three groups** – Large States, Small States and UTs to facilitate like-to-like comparison.
- **Rankings**- It provides **two types of rankings** i.e. Overall performance ranking and incremental performance ranking.
- **Findings**-
  - **Among larger states**- The overall performance score ranged from **76.6 per cent for Kerala to 36.4 per cent for Uttar Pradesh**. Haryana, Odisha, and Assam are the big states that have improved the most whereas Karnataka and Uttarakhand saw the biggest drop.
  - **Among smaller states**- Meghalaya, Nagaland and Goa improved considerably while Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram have shown a drop.
  - **Among UTs**- Delhi, along with Chandigarh, has retained its overall performance.



#### NITI AAYOG EDUCATION QUALITY INDEX

CATEGORIES	TOP 3	BOTTOM 3
Large states	Kerala, TN and Haryana	Telangana, Bihar, Jharkhand, UP
Small states	Tripura, Goa, Manipur	Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh
Union Territories	Chandigarh, Delhi, Puducherry	Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Andaman Islands, Lakshwadeep

### 3.3. PISA TEST

#### Why in news?

India will participate in the next **PISA (The Programme for International Student Assessment)** test to be conducted in 2021.

#### About the PISA test

- PISA is the **OECD's (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) Programme for International Student Assessment**.
- The aim of the test is to give a **comprehensive analysis of how education systems are working in the country in terms of preparing its students for higher education and subsequent employment**.
- It assesses students between the ages of **15 years and 3 months and 16 years and 2 months**, and who are enrolled in an educational institution at grade 7 or higher.
- It measures student performance in **mathematics, reading, and science and even innovative subjects like collaborative problem-solving and money literacy**.
  - Unlike conventional tests and exams, the PISA test does not assess students on their memory, rather their application capabilities.
- It is **held every three years** and the next test will be held in 2021. It was **first conducted in 2000**.

#### India's Participation

- **India has participated in the PISA test only once before, in 2009** in which it ranked 72<sup>nd</sup> out of 73 countries.





- The Government blamed “out of context” questions for the poor results in 2009 and decided it won’t participate further.
- However, Union Human Resource Ministry confirmed India’s participation for PISA 2021.
  - Students from government schools in Chandigarh, along with Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendra Vidyalayas will take the PISA test in 2021.

### 3.4. ANNUAL STATUS OF EDUCATION REPORT (ASER) 2019

#### Why in news?

Recently **NGO Pratham** published **ASER Report 2019 'Early Years'**.

#### About ASER 2019 Survey

- **Focusing on Early years:** The early years, is known to be the most important stage of cognitive, motor, social and emotional development in the human life cycle.
  - The 'Early Years' ASER collects data on the **schooling or pre schooling status of children in the age group 4-8.**
- It explores selected competencies categorized in **four domains:**
  - Early language acquisition,
  - Early numeracy skills,
  - Cognitive abilities and
  - Social and emotional learning.

#### About ASER

- ASER is **sample-based household survey** and **largest citizen-led survey** in India.
- It is an annual survey that aims to provide reliable annual estimates of **children’s schooling status and basic learning levels for each state and rural district in India**
- Every year since 2005, ASER has reported on the ability to do basic reading and arithmetic tasks for children in the **5-16 age group in Rural India.**
- In 2017, ASER '**Beyond Basics**' focused on the abilities, experiences, and aspirations of youth in the **14-18 age group.**

#### Key Highlights

#### Key Takeaways

- **Status of Pre-school and school enrolment patterns among young children (age 4-8):** More than 90% of young children in this age group are enrolled in some type of educational institution.
- **Status of Children in early primary grades (Std I-III):** The variation in age distribution which is widest in Std I, **decreases in each subsequent**

**grade.** And older children continue to do better than younger ones on every task.

- **Private schools performing better than the Government schools:** They have a **learning advantage** on all the crucial factors, such as, age distribution in grade one, home factors such as affluence, mother’s education and some baseline abilities that children enter grade one with.
- **Role of Mother’s education:** Among the pre-primary section, children with mothers who completed eight or fewer years of schooling are more likely to be attending anganwadis or government pre-primary classes.
- **Gender gaps:** It is visible among the young children of age 4-8 years, with more girls than boys enrolled in government institutions, and more boys than girls enrolled in private institutions.
- **Cognitive skills:** At age of 5, a large proportion of children is unable to do all of the activities. Moreover, children from less advantaged homes are **affected disproportionately.**

#### Pre-School Education and Care in India

- The **Right to Education Act** proposes that state governments make the necessary arrangements for **early childhood care and education** for all pre-school age children, that is 3 to 6 years.
- The **draft National Education Policy 2019** underlines the importance of early childhood education and prescribes guidelines for providing pre-primary education.

#### Difference between ASER and NAS (National Achievement Survey)

ASER Survey	NAS Survey
● It is a <b>household survey</b> conducted since 2005.	● It is a <b>school-based survey.</b>
● One-on-one oral assessments.	● It is a pen-paper test.
● Aimed at representative sample of all children (whether in school or out of school).	● It considers the children enrolled in government and government aided schools.
● It focuses on foundational skills such as reading and math.	● It looks at wider variety of skills.
● It is <b>limited to rural areas</b> of the country.	● It is conducted throughout the country in <b>both rural and urban areas.</b>
● It is a <b>citizen-led survey</b> (conducted by PRATHAM).	● It is <b>conducted by NCERT</b> under Ministry of Human Resource Development.

### 3.5. ALL INDIA SURVEY ON HIGHER EDUCATION (AISHE)

#### Why in news?

Recently, Ministry of Human Resource Development released **All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE)** for the year 2018-19.

#### About the AISHE

- Ministry of Human Resource Development conducts an **annual web-based AISHE** since 2010-11.
- Survey covers **all higher education institutions in the country**, which are categorised into 3 broad categories: **university, college & stand-alone institutions**.
- Following indicators of educational development are also determined through AISHE:
  - Institution Density,
  - Gross Enrolment Ratio,
  - Pupil-Teacher ratio,
  - Gender Parity Index and
  - Per Student Expenditure

#### Key Findings of AISHE

- **Enrolment in Higher Education: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)** in higher education in India has risen marginally from **25.8% in 2017-18 to 26.3% in 2018-19**, with men constituting 26.3% and women 26.4%.
  - **Uttar Pradesh has highest student enrolment** followed by Maharashtra.
- **Number of Institutions of Higher Education:** Number of universities & total higher educational institutions has increased.
- **Narrowing gender gap:** Nearly 51.36% of enrolled are male & 48.64% are female, indicating narrowing gender gap in higher education.
- **College density** i.e. number of colleges per lakh eligible population varies from **7 in Bihar to 53 in Karnataka as compared to All India average of 28**.
- **Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR)** in Universities & Colleges is **29** if regular mode enrolment is considered.
- **Highest share of foreign students** come from neighbouring countries led by **Nepal**, followed by Afghanistan.
- **Social Backwardness:** SC & ST student enrolment is 14.89% & 5.53% respectively. Among minorities, 5.23% students belong to Muslim category and 2.32% to other minority communities.

### 3.6. EDUCATION QUALITY UPGRADATION AND INCLUSION PROGRAMME (EQUIP)

#### Why in News?

**Ministry of Human Resource Development** plans to launch an ambitious ₹1.5 lakh crore action plan Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme (EQUIP) to **improve the quality and accessibility of higher education over the next five years (2019-2024)**.

#### About Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme (EQUIP)

- It is meant to bridge the gap between **policy and implementation**.
- **Objectives:**
  - double the **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)** in higher education,
  - resolve the geographically skewed access to higher educational institutions,
  - achieve **globally acceptable quality standards across the country**,
  - **position at least 20 Indian institutions among the top global institutions**, promote research / innovation eco system,
  - substantially improve employability of the students, promote framework for internationalisation;
  - better accreditation systems,
  - **use of education technology**,
  - governance reforms and quantum increase in investments.

### 3.7. NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR TECHNOLOGY (NEAT)

#### Why in news?

Recently, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has announced a new scheme, **National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT)**.

#### About National Educational Alliance for Technology

- This **public-private partnership scheme** aims to **harness technology for better learning outcomes in higher education**.
- It will be **in partnership with companies using artificial intelligence** to make learning more personalised and customised as per the learner's requirements.



- It aims to bring start-up companies working on this technology **under a common platform for easier access to students.**
- **EdTech companies** would be responsible for developing solutions and manage registration of learners through the NEAT portal.
  - They would be free to charge fees as per their policy.
  - **MoUs** will be signed with the shortlisted EdTech companies.
- MHRD would act as a **facilitator to ensure that the solutions are freely available** to a large number of economically backward students.
  - It would create and maintain a **National NEAT platform** that would provide one-stop access to these technological solutions.
  - The companies would have to offer free coupons to the extent of 25% of the total registrations for their solution through NEAT portal for students from disadvantaged communities.
  - **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) under MHRD**, the national level regulator for technical education in the country, would be the implementing agency for NEAT programme.
  - The scheme shall be administered under the guidance of an Apex Committee constituted by MHRD.
  - Independent Expert Committees would be constituted for evaluating and selecting the EdTech solutions.

**Related information****Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Programme-DHRUV**

- Union Human Resource Development Minister launched **Pradhan Mantri Innovative Learning Programme-DHRUV**.
- It will act as a platform to explore the talent of outshining and meritorious students, and help them achieve excellence in their specific areas of interest.
- It is a 14-day learning programme in which talented children will be **mentored and nurtured by renowned experts in different areas.**
- The programme will be called DHRUV (after the Pole Star) and every student to be called '**DHRUV TARA**'.
- It will cover two areas i.e. **Science and Performing Arts**. There will be 60 students in all, 30 from each area.
- The students will be broadly from classes 9 to 12, from **all schools including government and private.**
- Later the programme will be expanded gradually to other fields like creative writing etc.

### 3.8. PRIME MINISTER'S SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

**Why in news?**

Recently, Prime Minister approved changes to the '**Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme (PMSS)** under the National Defence Fund (NDF).

**Details**

- PMSS aims to **promote technical and post-graduate education** for the widows and children of the deceased/ex-service personnel of Armed Forces and Para Military Forces and Railway Protection Force.
- It is being implemented by the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare, **Ministry of Defence** in respect of armed forces.
  - The scheme is **also being implemented by Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Railways** for the personnel of paramilitary forces and Railway Protection force respectively.
- **Changes:** Now wards of **state police officials** who were killed during terror/naxal attacks have also been included.

**About National Defence Fund (NDF)**

- It was set up to **take charge of voluntary donations** in cash and kind received for promotion of the national defence effort, and to decide on their utilisation.
- It was **established in 1962.**
- It is used for the **welfare of the members of the Armed Forces** (including Para Military Forces) and their dependents.
- It is administered by an **Executive Committee, with PM as Chairperson**, and Defence, Finance and Home Ministers as Members.

### 3.9. INSTITUTE OF EMINENCE

**Why in news?**

The Union government granted the institute of eminence (IoE) status to 14 more higher educational institutions taking the list to 20.

**About Institute of Eminence**

- **Aim:** The aim of the scheme is to bring higher educational institutions selected as IoEs in top 500 of world ranking in the next 10 years and in top 100 eventually overtime.
- **Objective:** Objective is to provide world class teaching and research facilities to Indian students within the country and enhance general level of education of the country.
- **Financial support:** Each Public Institution selected as IoE will be provided financial assistance up to Rs. 1000 Cr over a period of five years.



- **In case of the private institutions, there will be no financial support**, but they will be entitled for more autonomy as a special category Deemed University.
- **Greenfield Institutions:** The Greenfield Institutions would get 3-year period to establish and operationalise the institution, and thereafter, the Empowered Expert Committee (EEC) will consider giving IoE status to such institutions.
  - Government in 2018 had constituted a four member EEC to select 20 Institutions of Eminence from among 104 institutions (public or private) that had applied for the status.

#### Salient features

- **Greater autonomy** viz. to admit foreign students up to 30% of admitted students;
- To **recruit foreign faculty upto 25% of faculty strength**;
- To **offer online courses upto 20% of its programmes**;
- To **enter into academic collaboration with top 500** in the world ranking Institutions without permission of UGC;
- Free to fix and charge fees from foreign students without restriction;
- Flexibility of course structure in terms of number of credit hours and years to take a degree;
- Complete flexibility in fixing of curriculum and syllabus, etc. has been provided to IoEs.

#### Related information

##### Paramarsh Scheme

- **Ministry for Human Resource Development** recently launched 'Paramarsh' – a **University Grants Commission (UGC) scheme** for Mentoring Institutions aspiring to achieve **National Accreditation and Assessment Council (NAAC) Accreditation**.
- **Focus areas** will include curricular aspects, teaching-learning & evaluation, research, innovation, institutional values & practices, etc.
- The scheme will target 1000 Higher Education Institutions for mentoring with a specific focus on quality as enumerated in the UGC "Quality Mandate".

##### National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)

- It was established in 1994 as an **autonomous institution of the University Grants Commission (UGC)**.
- It aims to make quality assurance an integral part of the functioning of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
- The NAAC functions through its **General Council (GC) and Executive Committee (EC)** comprising educational administrators, policy makers and

senior academicians from a cross-section of Indian higher education system.

- The Chairperson of the UGC is the President of the GC of the NAAC, the Chairperson of the EC is an eminent academician nominated by the President of GC (NAAC).

### 3.10. STUDY IN INDIA

#### Why in News?

To bring foreign students to Indian campuses, Budget 2020 proposed to start an **Indo-SAT exam under a 'Study in India' scheme**, to enable evaluation and study of students from Asia and Africa who seek admission here.

#### About Study in India

- The 'Study in India' programme's primary objective is to **target foreign students by branding India as an attractive education destination**.
- The programme focuses on attracting international students **from select 30 plus countries across South-East Asia, Middle East and Africa**.
- **Objectives**
  - To **improve the soft power** of India with focus on the neighbouring countries and use it as a tool in diplomacy.
  - To **boost the number of inbound International students** in India.
  - To double India's market share of global education exports from less than 1 percent to 2 percent.
  - Increase in contribution of international student in the form of direct spends, indirect spends, spillover effects.
  - Improvement in overall quality of higher education.
  - Increase in global ranking of India as educational destination.
  - To reduce the export – Import imbalance in the number of International students.
- The programme envisages **participation of select reputed Indian institutes and universities** by way of offering seats for international students at affordable rates.
- The **proposed fee waivers** to meritorious foreign students in this policy will be decided by the Institute.
  - The expenditure on the fee waiver will have to be borne by the Institute concerned. No additional cash flow from Government is proposed for the same.
- It is a **joint initiative of Ministry of HRD, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.

- **EdCIL (India) Limited**, a Mini Ratna Category I CPSE is the **implementing agency of the Ministry of HRD** for the Study in India education campaign.
- A **centralised admission web portal** has also been launched to work as a single window for admission of foreign students.

### 3.11. QS INDIA UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

#### Why in news?

Recently 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of **QS India University Rankings** has been released.

#### Key findings

- The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) dominate the list, with seven IITs figuring in the top ten rankings.
  - IIT-Bombay leads followed by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year.
- The rankings include public, private, higher education or deemed universities.
- The **methodology used eight indicators to determine the institutions' rankings.**
- These were:
  - academic reputation,
  - employer reputation,
  - faculty-student ratio,
  - the proportion of staff with a PhD,
  - papers per faculty,

- citations per paper,
- the proportion of international students, and
- the proportion of international faculty.
- In the **QS World University Rankings Asia 2020, 96 Indian institutions** rank among 550 (8 among the top 100 and 31 among the top 250) for the continent.
- Only Mainland China is more represented than India. It has four institutions in the top 10 this year, India **does not yet have a university among the top 30.**
  - The best performing institution from India is **IIT Bombay** (dropped one place to 34<sup>th</sup> place), It is followed by **IIT Delhi** (43<sup>rd</sup> place) and **IIT Madras** (50<sup>th</sup> place).

#### About QS University rankings.

- **QS World University Rankings** is an annual publication of university rankings by Quacquarelli Symonds, a British company specialising in education.
- The QS system now comprises the global overall and subject rankings alongside five independent regional tables (Asia, Latin America, Emerging Europe and Central Asia, the Arab Region, and BRICS).

#### Related News - Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2020

- **The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru, shares the first rank with IIT Ropar** this year and continues to be the best Indian institute in this ranking since 2014.
- Both the institutes have been ranked among the **top 301-350 universities** of the world.

## 4. HEALTH

### 4.1. NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION ACT 2019

#### Why in News?

Recently, President gave assent to National Medical Commission (NMC) Act 2019.

#### Background

- **Prof. Ranjit Roy Chaudhury committee (2015)** recommended structurally reconfiguring the (Medical Council of India) MCI's functions and **suggested the formation of a National Medical Commission.**
- Various other committees such as **Lodha Panel (2016)** and **Arvind Panagariya** have also previously suggested scrapping of the MCI.
- Government earlier superseded the MCI through the Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018. The powers of the MCI were also switched from the elective council body to the board of governors.
- Recently, the government also passed the **Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Bill of 2019** to further continue the interim provisions of the ordinance.
- The National Medical Commission (NMC) Act, 2019 seeks to replace the MCI with a National Medical Commission and overhaul the medical education system.

#### Medical Council of India

- It is a statutory body, established under **Indian Medical Council Act 1956.**
- It regulates
  - standards of medical education.
  - permission to start colleges, courses or increase the number of seats.
  - standards of professional conduct of medical practitioners such as registration of doctors etc.

#### About NMC Act

- The Act seeks to **propose to repeal the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 and replace the Medical Council of India (MCI)**
- It provides for a **medical education system** which ensures:
  - availability of adequate and high-quality medical professionals
  - adoption of the latest medical research by medical professionals
  - periodic assessment of medical institutions
  - an effective grievance redressal mechanism.

- **Constitution of the National Medical Commission:** The Act sets up the National Medical Commission (NMC). Also, within three years of the passage of the Act, state governments will establish State Medical Councils at the state level.
  - The NMC will consist of **25 members, appointed by the central government.**
  - A **Search Committee** which will be nominated by the central government will recommend names to the central government for the post of Chairperson, and the part time members.
  - **Members of the NMC will include:**
    - ✓ **Chairperson (must be a medical practitioner)**
    - ✓ Presidents of the Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate Medical Education Boards
    - ✓ General of Health Services, Directorate General of Health Services
    - ✓ Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research
    - ✓ five members (part-time) to be elected by the registered medical practitioners from amongst themselves from states and union territories for a period of two years.
- **Functions of the National Medical Commission**
  - framing policies for regulating medical institutions and medical professionals
  - assessing the requirements of healthcare related human resources and infrastructure
  - ensuring compliance by the State Medical Councils of the regulations made under the Act
- **Medical Advisory Council:** Under the Act, the central government will constitute a Medical Advisory Council.
  - The Council will be the **primary platform** through which the states/union territories can put forth their **views and concerns before the NMC.**
  - Further, the Council will advise the NMC on **measures to determine and maintain minimum standards of medical education.**
- **Autonomous boards:** The Act sets up autonomous boards under the supervision of the NMC. Each autonomous board will consist of a President and four members, appointed by the central government. These boards are



- **Under-Graduate Medical Education Board and Post-Graduate Medical Education Board** to set standards and regulate medical education at undergraduate level and postgraduate level respectively.
- **Medical Assessment and Rating Board** for inspections and rating of medical institutions and
- **Ethics and Medical Registration Board** to regulate and promote professional conduct and medical ethics and also maintain national registers of
  - ✓ licensed medical practitioners and
  - ✓ Community Health Providers (CHPs).
- **Limited licensing:** Under the Act, the NMC may grant a limited license to certain mid-level practitioners connected with the modern medical profession to practice medicine. These mid-level practitioners may prescribe specified medicines in primary and preventive healthcare.
- **Entrance examinations:** There will be a uniform National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to under-graduate and post-graduate super-specialty medical education in all medical institutions regulated under the Act. The NMC will specify the manner of conducting common counselling for admission in all such medical institutions.
- **National Exit Test (NEXT):** The Act also mentions that National Exit Test, which is to gain a licence to practise after MBBS, can also serve as an entrance examination to post-graduate level.
- **Regulation of fees:** The Act also proposes for the NMC to "frame guidelines for determination of fee and other charges" for 50% of seats in private medical institutions and deemed to be universities.
  - Currently, state governments determine fees for 85% of seats in such institutions and the rest are left for the management.

## 4.2. THE HEALTHCARE SERVICE PERSONNEL AND CLINICAL ESTABLISHMENTS (PROHIBITION OF VIOLENCE AND DAMAGE TO PROPERTY) BILL, 2019

### Why in news?

Recently government has framed the Healthcare Service Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of Violence and Damage to Property) Bill 2019 which **aims at prohibiting violence against doctors and other healthcare professionals.**

### Background

- As per Indian Medical Association Study, **75% of health professionals face such violence** throughout their career out of these **50% - 60% violence takes place in ICU and emergency services division.**
- **Currently, such violent acts are dealt by Indian Penal Code, 1860** with imprisonment upto 7 years. Health professionals are protected under various state laws.
- However, current laws does not protect victims indirectly affected due hindrance in health service delivery.

### Features of the Healthcare Service Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of violence and damage to property) Bill, 2019

- **Definition of violence:** Under the draft Bill, violence means any act which may cause:
  - harm, injury or danger to the life of a healthcare service personnel, while discharging their duty,
  - obstruction or hindrance to healthcare service personnel, while discharging their duty, and
  - loss or damage to any property or documents in a clinical establishment.
- **Cognizable and a non-bailable offence:** The draft bill proposes to make acts of violence against healthcare professionals a cognizable and a non-bailable offence, and investigation to be conducted by officer not below the rank Deputy Superintendent of Police.
- **Range of coverage for healthcare providers and establishment:** From doctors, nurses and paramedics to medical nurses, medical students to ambulance drivers. Property of clinical establishment includes a hospital, a clinic, a dispensary, a sanatorium, an ambulance or even a mobile unit.
- **Punishment and fine: imprisonment between six months to five years, along with a fine of up to five lakh rupees.** However, if any person causes **grievous hurt** to a healthcare service professional, he will be imprisoned for a period between **three years to ten years**, along with a **fine between two lakh rupees and Rs 10 lakh.**
  - In addition to the punishment for offences committed under the draft Bill, the convicted person will also be liable to **pay compensation to the affected parties** such as payment of twice the amount of the market value of the damaged property.
  - If a convicted person does not pay the compensation then the **sum will be recovered by attaching properties** under the Revenue Recovery Act, 1890.

### 4.3. MENTAL HEALTHCARE

#### Why in news?

Recently, there has been a discussion over the gap between the requirements and availability of facilities in the **mental healthcare sector** in India.

#### Background

- According to a recent **National Mental Health survey**, approximately **150 million people** in India need care for their mental health condition.
  - It further says that between 70 and 92% of these cases **failed to receive treatment**.
- The World Health Organisation says India has the **highest number of teenage suicide** rates globally.
- The mental health it forms part of **Sustainable Development Goal 3**, which emphasises well-being of all.

#### Issues with Mental Healthcare in India

- **Lack of awareness about the issue**
- **Lack of infrastructure**
- **Social stigma** because of lower awareness
- **Increasing competitiveness**
- **Lack of implementation**- only 19 States have implemented the Mental Healthcare Act till now.

#### Steps taken

- **National Mental Health Programme (NMHP)**- implemented since 1982, the Government is supporting implementation of the **District Mental Health Programme (DMHP)** in 517 districts of the country for detection, management and treatment of mental disorders/ illness.
- Government of India has launched a **National Mental Health Policy 2014** –
  - Universal access to mental healthcare institutions.
  - Strengthen leadership in the mental health care.
  - Gives out role for central and state governments, local bodies and civil society organizations.
- Government has recently come out with **Mental Health Care Act 2017** with the aim of avoiding discrimination and improving their autonomy in their decisions.
- **RAAH app: National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS)** created RAAH app. It is a mobile application which helps people to search for information about

professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers, special educators and occupational therapists working with government, non-government organisations such as NGOs, clinics, hospitals, and rehabilitation centres.

#### Mental Healthcare Act, 2017

- **Rights of person with mental illness**- every person shall have a right to access mental health care and treatment from mental health services run or funded by the appropriate government at an affordable price, free for homeless and BPL.
- **Advance Directives**: given by mentally ill person regarding her treatment and who shall be her nominated representative
- **Central and State Mental Health Authority**: These bodies are required to regulate various provisions relating to mental health establishments, professionals, law enforcement officials and other issues.
- **Suicide is decriminalized**- person attempting suicide will be treated as mentally ill and will not be treated as criminal offence under Section 309 of IPC.
- **Mental Health Review Commission**: will be a quasi-judicial body that will periodically review the use of and the procedure for making advance directives and advice the government on protection of the rights of mentally ill persons.
- **Mental Health Review Board** to protect the rights of persons with mental illness and manage advance directives.
- A person with mental illness shall not be subjected to electro-convulsive therapy without the use of muscle relaxants and anesthesia.

### 4.4. MATERNAL MORTALITY DECLINES

#### Why in news?

**Recent special bulletin on Maternal Mortality** released by the **Sample Registration Survey (SRS)** recorded the **decline of maternal deaths in India**.

#### Maternal Deaths

- As per WHO, **Maternal death** is the **death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy**, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes.
  - **Maternal Mortality ratio (MMR)** is the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live birth.
- The major **complications** that account for nearly **75% of all maternal deaths** are:
  - severe bleeding (mostly after childbirth)



- infections (usually after childbirth)
- high blood pressure during pregnancy
- complications from delivery and unsafe abortion
- The **sustainable development goals** set by the United Nations target reducing the **global MMR to less than 70 per one lakh live births by 2030**.

#### Relevant Government Initiatives

- National Health Mission
- LaQshya
- POSHAN Abhiyan
- Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan
- Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram
- Janani Suraksha Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
- Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan Initiative (SUMAN)

#### Sample Registration survey

- It is based on a system of dual recording of births and deaths in fairly representative sample units spread all over the country.
- The **SRS provides annual estimates** of (a) population composition, (b) fertility, (c) mortality, and (d) medical attention at the time of birth or death which give some idea about access to medical care.
- Sample Registration System (SRS) is an initiative of **Office of the Registrar General** with a view to generate reliable and continuous data on these indicators.

#### Key Findings of the report

- **Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)** of India has **declined from 130 in 2014-2016 to 122 in 2015-17**. The MMR is derived as a proportion of maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births reported..
- The **SRS** had categorized the **States into three groups**:
  - **Empowered Action Group (EAG) States**: Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Assam. The drop has been most significant in EAG States **from 188 to 175**.
  - **Southern States**: Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. Here, MMR declined **from 77 to 72**.
  - **Other States**: the remaining States and Union Territories. MMR declined **from 93 to 90** in these states.
- MMR in individual states like **Kerala** is the **lowest** at 42, whereas it is the **highest** in **Assam** at 229.
- While **Karnataka** has shown the **highest percentage decline in MMR**, **Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh** have shown an **increase** by 15 points each in MMR.

## 4.5. HEALTHY STATES, PROGRESSIVE INDIA

### Why in News?

Recently, the **NITI Aayog** has released the second edition of the comprehensive Health Index report titled, “**Healthy States, Progressive India**”.

### Background

- It **ranks states and Union territories** innovatively on their year-on-year incremental change in health outcomes, as well as, their overall performance with respect to each other.
- The report has been **developed by NITI Aayog**, with technical assistance from the **World Bank**, and in consultation with the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- The Health Index is a **weighted composite Index** based on three domains:
  - **Health Outcomes (70%)**;
  - **Governance and Information (12%)**; and
  - **Key Inputs and Processes (18%)**, with each domain assigned a weight based on its importance.
- Data submitted by the States & UTs was validated by an **Independent Validation Agency**.
- States and UTs have been ranked in **three categories** namely, **Larger States, Smaller States, and Union Territories (UTs)**, to ensure comparison among similar entities.
- The NITI Aayog had **first come out** with its report on state-wise health rankings in **2018**.
- This **second report** examines the performance for the period **2015-16** (base year) to **2017-18** (reference year), i.e., a two-year period.

### Key Insights from the Report

- **Overall picture in the health index**- Only about half the States and UTs had an improvement in the overall score between 2015-16 and 2017-18. The magnitude of change was bigger in UTs compared to Larger and Smaller States.
- **Larger States - Kerala, Andhra Pradesh & Maharashtra** ranked on top in terms of **overall performance**, while **Haryana, Rajasthan and Jharkhand** are the top three ranking States in terms of **annual incremental performance**.
- **Smaller States - Mizoram and Manipur** ranked on top in terms of **overall performance**, while **Tripura and Manipur** were the top ranked States in terms of **annual incremental performance**.
- **UTs - Chandigarh and Dadra and Nagar Haveli** were ranked on top in terms of **overall**



performance (Chandigarh-1 and Dadra and Nagar Haveli-2) as well as **annual incremental performance** (Dadra and Nagar Haveli-1 and Chandigarh-2).

- **Performance of five Empowered Action Group States-** Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha have witnessed a decline in the overall health index score.
- **Large disparities in overall performance** - The best states scored more than 2.5 times more than the worst performing states. E.g. While Kerala got 74.01, Uttar Pradesh's score was 28.61.
- There was a general **positive correlation** between the **Health Index scores and the economic development levels** of States and UTs as measured by per capita Net State Domestic Product (NSDP).

#### Empowered Action Group States

- The government had constituted an Empowered Action Group (EAG) under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** following 2001 census to stabilise population in eight states that were lagging in containing population.
- These states are Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

## 4.6. WHO INDIA COUNTRY COOPERATION STRATEGY (CCS)

### Why in news?

Recently, the Government of India unveiled 'The WHO India Country Cooperation Strategy 2019–2023: A Time of Transition' in public domain.

### Background

- The **WHO Country Cooperation Strategy 2019–2023**, has been developed jointly between WHO and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
  - It provides a roadmap for WHO to work with the Government of India towards achieving its health sector goals.
  - The priorities and activities outlined in the CCS are aligned with the goals and targets of the **National Health Policy 2017**.
- The India CCS is one of the first that fully aligns itself with the newly adopted WHO 13th General Programme of Work and its 'triple billion' targets.

### Key points in WHO India Country Cooperation Strategy

This CCS covers a period of five years 2019–2023 and sets out the broad strategic priorities and corresponding focus programme areas.

- It outlines **four strategic priorities**
  - Accelerate progress on universal health coverage (UHC)
  - Promote health and wellness by addressing determinants of health
  - Better protect the population against health emergencies
  - Enhance India's global leadership in health

#### World Health Organisation

- It was established on 7 April 1948, and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- The WHO is a member of the United Nations Development Group.
- WHO has 194 member states: all of them Member States of the United Nations except for the Cook Islands and Niue.
- The WHO is financed by contributions from member states and outside donors.
- The World Health Assembly (WHA) is the legislative and supreme body of WHO. It meets annually and reviews various works of WHO. It also appoints the Director-General every five years.
- **Publications of WHO-** World Health Report, World Health Statistics, Bulletin of the World Health Organization.
- **India became a party** to the WHO in 1948.
- **WHO's 13th General Programme of Work (GPW 13)-** It was adopted by member states in 2018. In this the WHO has unveiled the "**triple billion**" target.
  - one billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage (UHC);
  - one billion more people better protected from health emergencies;
  - one billion more people enjoying better health and well-being.

#### Related news

##### World Health Assembly (WHA)

- Recently, 72nd Session of the World Health Organization's (WHO) World Health Assembly (WHA) took place in Geneva, Switzerland.
- WHA is the decision-making body of WHO, attended by delegations from all WHO Member States.
  - **Main function:** To determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed programme budget.

##### Important Resolutions Adopted during Assembly are:

- It recognized the role of primary health care and urges Member States to take measures to implement the **Declaration of Astana**, adopted at the 2018 Global Conference on Primary Health Care.
  - **Astana Declaration:** It is the global commitment to strengthen Primary Health

Care. This declaration reaffirms the historic **1978 Declaration of Alma-Ata**.

- **Alma-Ata Declaration** was the first declaration which identified Primary Health Care as a key to the attainment of the goal of Health for All.
- The resolution calls on Member States to **accelerate progress towards UHC** with a focus on poor, vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups.

#### UN meeting on universal health coverage (UHC)

- Recently United Nations General Assembly held a high-level meeting on universal health coverage (UHC).
- The UN High-level Meeting on UHC is the **first meeting on this topic at the UN**.
- It aims to mobilize the global community and secure political commitment from Heads of State and Government to accelerate progress toward achieving UHC by 2030.
  - As part of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, all countries have committed to try to achieve UHC by 2030.

#### National Health Policy 2017

##### Targets under NHP 2017

- increasing life expectancy to 70 years from 67.5 years by 2025
- reduce infant mortality rate to 28 by 2019
- reduce under five mortality to 23 by 2025
- reduce Total Fertility Rate to 2.1 at the national and sub-national levels by 2025
- Maternal Mortality Ratio from current levels to 100 by 2020
- reduce neo-natal mortality to 16 and stillbirth rate to “single digit” by 2025.

##### Important Provisions

- Strengthening role of public sector by increasing public health spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2025 from current 1.15%. States should spend 8% of more of their budget towards health by 2020
- Mainstreaming AYUSH systems by three-dimensional integration encompassing cross referrals, co-location and integrative practices across systems of medicines in both rural and urban areas.

- Affordable quality healthcare for all by ensuring following-
  - Universal access to drugs and diagnostics, emergency and essential health services
  - providing every family with a health card for PHC services
  - secondary and tertiary care services through a combination of public hospitals & strategic purchasing in healthcare deficit areas from accredited non-governmental healthcare providers
  - Establish public health management cadre in all states

#### Shifts seen in new policy

- **From communicable to non-communicable diseases:** policy advocates pre-screening and sets the target to reduce premature mortality via NCDs **by 25% by 2025**.
- **Collaborating & regulating the private sector:** it proposes
  - ✓ **National health care standards organization (NHCSO)** to lay down standards and protocol
  - ✓ **Tribunals** for redressal of grievances
- **Shift from sick-care to wellness:** For this,
  - ✓ **early screening** and diagnosis have been made a public responsibility
  - ✓ commitment to **pre-emptive care** to achieve optimum levels of child and adolescent health through school health programmes and focus on health and hygiene in curriculum
  - ✓ advocates 2/3<sup>rd</sup> or more allocation of health budget for Primary Health Care
  - ✓ assuring comprehensive primary health care through the Health and Wellness Centers'
- **Urban Health Care:** prioritizes addressing the primary health care needs of the urban population with special focus on poor populations, convergence among the wider determinants of health – air pollution, vector control, reduction of violence and urban stress.

# 5. NUTRITION AND SANITATION

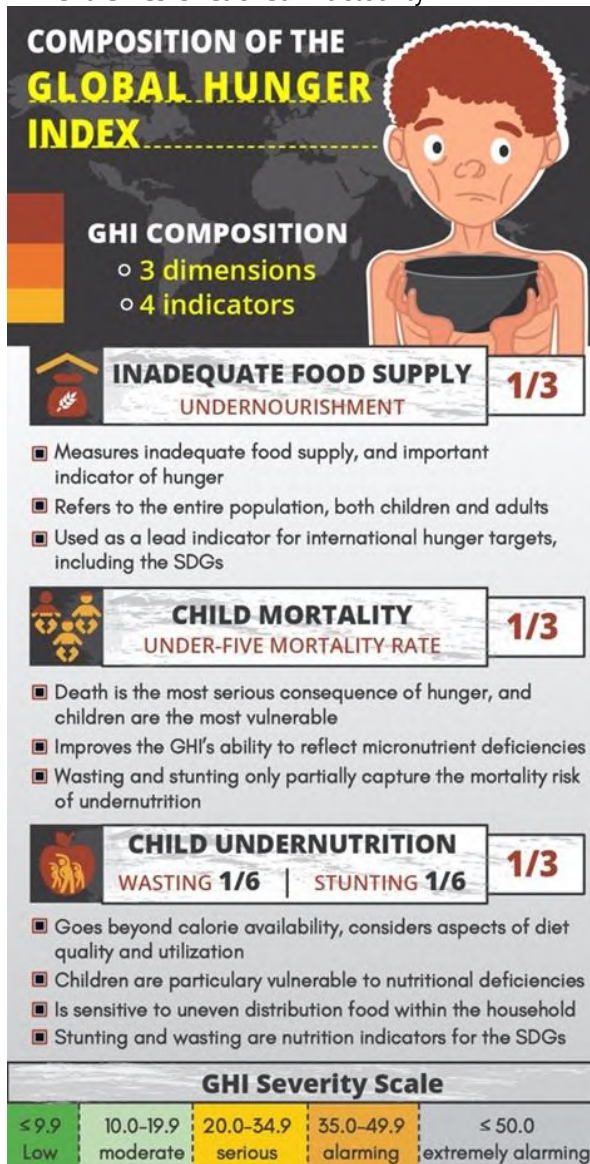
## 5.1. GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX 2019

### Why in news?

Global Hunger Index was released recently.

### About Global Hunger Index

- The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool **designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at the global, regional, and country levels.**
- High-income countries are not included in the GHI
- The GHI has been released by **Welthungerhilfe** (lately in partnerships with Concern Worldwide) since 2000.
- The GHI ranks countries on a 100-point scale, with **0 being the best score (no hunger) and 100 being the worst**, although neither of these extremes is reached in actuality.



### Key Findings

- **Global Hunger is moving from Serious to Moderate:** This score reflects a decline of 31 percent since 2000, when the global GHI score was 29.0 and fell into the serious category.
- **Highest in South Asia and Africa South of the Sahara:** South Asia and Africa South of the Sahara are the regions with the highest 2019 GHI scores, at 29.3 and 28.4 respectively, indicating serious levels of hunger.
- **Inequality within countries:** Inequalities within country borders allow hunger and undernutrition to persist even in countries that appear to be doing well according to national averages.
- **Climate change as a threat:** Countries with high GHI scores are often also highly vulnerable to climate change but have the least capacity to adapt; several countries with low GHI scores are the least vulnerable and most ready.

### GHI and India

- India has slipped from 95th rank in 2010 to **102nd in 2019** on the Global Hunger Index (GHI).
- India has demonstrated **improvement in under 5 mortality rates.**
- India's **child wasting rate is extremely high at 20.8 percent**, the highest wasting rate of any country. **India's child stunting rate, 37.9 percent, is also categorized as very high.**
- In India, **just 9.6 percent of all children between 6 and 23 months of age are fed a minimum acceptable diet.**
- The report also highlights that **despite of "Clean India" campaign open defecation is still practiced.** This situation jeopardizes the population's health and consequently children's growth and development as their ability to absorb nutrients is compromised.

### Related information

- **Wasting:** low weight for respective height, reflecting acute undernutrition;
- **Stunting:** low height for respective age, reflecting chronic undernutrition

## 5.2. STATE OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN THE WORLD, 2019

### Why in News?

United Nations released The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, 2019.



## About State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World

- It is issued **annually** by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

### Findings of the report

- The report highlights that after decades of declining, **hunger is again on the rise**.
- In Asia, despite great progress in the last five years, **Southern Asia is the highest sub region with almost 15% of prevalence of undernourishment**.
- In high-income countries, too, sizeable portions of the population lack regular access to nutritious and sufficient food.
- Globally, **the prevalence of stunting among children under five years is decreasing**.
- Globally, **7.3 percent (49.5 million) children under five years of age are wasted**, two-thirds of whom live in Asia.
- Overweight and obesity** are on the rise in almost all countries, contributing to 4 million deaths globally.
- Women have a higher chance of suffering from food insecurity than men**, with the largest gender gap being in Latin America.

#### Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- The FAO is a **specialized agency of the United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- Their goal is to achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives.
- India is its member.**

#### International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

- It is an **international financial institution** and **specialized agency of the United Nations** based in Rome, Italy that works to address poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries.
- It was one of the major outcomes of the **1974 World Food Conference** and was set up in 1977.
- India is a member.**

#### Related News

##### Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey

- The Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey was conducted by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and UNICEF** between February 2016 and October 2018.
- It is the first study undertaken to **measure malnutrition**, including **micronutrient**

deficiencies through biochemical measures such as blood and urine samples, **anthropometric data** as well as **details of non-communicable diseases** such as diabetes.

#### 'Feed Our Future' campaign

- The **United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)** have launched a cinema advertisement campaign 'Feed Our Future' to raise awareness and take steps against hunger and malnutrition in India.
- About World Food Programme (WFP)**
  - It's the food-assistance branch of the United Nations, setup in 1961, and the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.
  - Its headquarters is in **Rome, Italy**.
  - It is a member of the United Nations Development Group and part of its Executive Committee
  - The WFP operations are funded by voluntary donations from world governments, corporations and private donors.

## 5.3. EAT RIGHT INDIA CAMPAIGN

### Why in News?

The 'EAT RIGHT INDIA Campaign', with its new logo and tagline 'Sahi Bhojan, Behtar Jeevan' was released by the Union Health minister.

### About Eat Right India movement

- Eat Right Movement was launched in 2018 by **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India** to improve public health in India and combat negative nutritional trends to fight lifestyle diseases.
- It is **multi-sectoral effort** with primary focus on daily intake of salt, sugar, fat, phasing-out trans-fats from diets and promoting healthier food options.
- It is built on **two broad pillars of Eat Healthy and Eat Safe**.
- It brings together three ongoing initiatives of FSSAI that target citizens:
  - The Safe and Nutritious Food (SNF) Initiative**, focused on social and behavioural change around food safety and nutrition at home, school, workplace and on-the-go.
  - The Eat Healthy Campaign** focused on daily intake of salt, sugar, fat, phasing-out trans-fats.
  - Food fortification**, focused on promoting five staple foods- wheat flour, rice, oil, milk and salt, with key vitamins and minerals added to improve their nutritional content.

- The Eat Right Movement brings together the **stakeholders on both the demand and supply-side.**
- On the demand side, **the Eat Right Movement focuses on empowering citizens** to make the right food choices.
- On the supply side, **it nudges food businesses to reformulate their products, provide better nutritional information to consumers and make investments in healthy food as responsible food businesses.**

#### Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- It is an **autonomous body** established under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.**
- The FSSAI has been established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006** which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India.
- FSSAI is responsible for protecting and promoting **public health** through the **regulation and supervision of food safety.**

#### Related News

##### NetSCoFAN (Network for Scientific Co-operation for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition)

- It is created by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- It is a **network of research & academic institutions** working in the area of food & nutrition
- It **comprises of eight groups of institutions working in different areas** viz. biological, chemical, nutrition & labelling, food of animal origin, food of plant origin, water & beverages, food testing, and safer & sustainable packaging.
- It would identify research gaps in respective areas and collect, collate and develop database on food safety issues for risk assessment activities.

## 5.4. SWACHH SURVEKSHAN LEAGUE 2020

### Why in News?

Recently, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched Swachh Survekshan League 2020 under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban).

### More in News

- It will be a **quarterly cleanliness assessment of cities and towns** in India and will be integrated with 5th edition of Swachh Survekshan 2020.
- **Objective:** Sustaining the on-ground performance of cities along with continuous monitoring of service level performance when it comes to cleanliness.
- **Ranking:** It will be assigned in two categories, namely, cities with population of one lakh and

above and cities with population of less than 1 lakh.

- **Significance:** Performance of cities in SS League 2020 will be crucial to their ranking in **Swachh Survekshan 2020** due to the 25% weightage of the quarterly assessments to be included in the annual survey in January 2020.

### About Swachh Survekshan

- Swachh Survekshan is a **ranking exercise taken to assess rural and urban areas** for their levels of cleanliness and active implementation of Swachhata mission initiatives in a timely and innovative manner.
- The objective of the survey is to **encourage large scale citizen participation and create awareness amongst all sections of society** about the importance of working together towards making towns and cities a better place to live in.
- Additionally, the survey also intends to **foster a spirit of healthy competition among towns and cities** to improve their service delivery to citizens, towards creating cleaner cities and towns.
- **Ministry of Urban Development** takes up the Swachh Survekshan in urban areas and the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** in rural areas.
- The **Quality Council of India (QCI)** has been commissioned the responsibility of carrying out the assessment.

#### Quality Council of India

- It was **set up jointly** by the **Government of India and the Indian Industry** represented by the three premier industry associations i.e. Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- It aims to establish and operate **national accreditation structure** and promote quality through National Quality Campaign.
- It is **governed by a Council** of 38 members with **equal representations** of government, industry and consumers.
- **Chairman of QCI** is **appointed by the Prime Minister** on recommendation of the industry to the government
- The Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, **Ministry of Commerce & Industry**, is the nodal ministry for QCI.

#### Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2019

- The top three states are **Tamil Nadu, Haryana and Gujarat.**
  - **Top 3 Districts** – 1) Peddapalli, Telangana, 2) Faridabad, Haryana, 3) Rewari, Haryana.
  - **State with maximum citizen participation-** Uttar Pradesh.

- This various set of parameters are given following weightage.
  - **30 per cent weightage: Direct observation** of researchers wherein they check availability and usage of toilets, status of water logging and plastic littering.
  - **35 per cent:** Citizen feedback received online, during group meetings and from key influencers.
  - **35 per cent:** Service level progress.

**Related News****Swachh – Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan**

- **Launched by:** Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)

- It was a **mass cleanliness-cum-awareness drive** in collaboration with the National Green Corps (NGC- Eco-club) in **50 identified beaches** between 11th -17th November, 2019.
- The identified beaches are in 10 coastal States/Union Territories (UTs) - Gujarat, Daman & Diu, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha.
- NGC Programme of MoEFCC, operated through Eco-clubs set up in schools registered as members of NGC, aims at building cadres of young children working towards environmental conservation and sustainable development.

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## 6. MISCELLANEOUS

### 6.1. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2019

#### Why in News?

The 2019 Human Development Report “Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: Inequalities in human development in the 21st century”, was recently released.

#### About the Human Development Report

- The Human Development Report was released for the first time in the year 1990, by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**.
- The Human Development Report Office releases five composite indices each year: **Human Development Index (HDI)**, the **Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI)**, the **Gender Development Index (GDI)**, the **Gender Inequality Index (GII)**, and the **Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)**.
- Human Development Index (HDI) is released as part of first Human Development Report. This measures achievement in the basic dimensions of human development across countries. The **HDI ranks countries on the basis of three parameters:**
  - Life expectancy
  - Education
  - Per capita income

#### Findings with respect to India

- India ranks **129 (score 0.647) out of 189 countries** on the 2019 Human Development Index (HDI). This is an **improvement** from 130<sup>th</sup> (score 0.643) position in 2018.
- In India, between 1990 and 2018, **life expectancy at birth increased by 11.6 years, mean years of schooling increased by 3.5 years and expected years of schooling increased by 4.7 years.** Per capita incomes rose by over 250 per cent.
- **India is only marginally better** than the South Asian average on the **gender development index (0.829 versus 0.828)**, and ranks at a **low 122 of 162 countries** on the 2018 gender inequality index.

### 6.2. SDG INDIA INDEX 2019

#### Why in News?

NITI Aayog released the **second edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index.**

#### SDG India Index

- **NITI Aayog** has developed the SDG India Index in collaboration with the **Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Global Green Growth Institute and United Nations.**
- It **comprehensively documents the progress** made by India’s States and Union Territories **towards achieving the 2030 SDG targets.**
- It functions as a **tool for focused policy dialogue, formulation and implementation,** and moving towards development action pegged to globally recognizable metrics.
- It also helps in **highlighting crucial gaps related to monitoring SDGs** and the need for improving statistical systems at the National/State/UT levels.
- **UN** has developed **232 indicators** to measure compliance by member nations while **NITI Aayog** has adapted the monitoring approach to the Indian context, with **100 indicators** of its own for the Index which are drawn from MoSPI’s **National Indicator Framework (NIF)**.
  - **NIF consists of 306 indicators for monitoring** the progress of SDGs.
- SDG India Index 2019 is **more robust than the first edition** as the Index spans 16 out of 17 SDGs with a qualitative assessment on Goal 17, while 2018 Index covered only 13 goals.
- A **composite score was computed in the range of 0–100 for each State/UT** based on its aggregate performance across 16 SDGs.
- The **higher the score of a State/UT, the closer it is towards achieving the targets.**
- **Classification criteria based on SDG India Index** score is as follows: Aspirant: 0 – 49, Performer: 50 – 64, Front Runner: 65 – 99 and Achiever: 100.

#### Highlights of the Index

- India’s composite score has **improved from 57 in 2018 to 60 in 2019.** All the **States/UTs are either in Performer or Front Runner category.**
- **Kerala achieved the first rank** with a score of 70, **followed by Himachal Pradesh.**
- **Bihar** with a score of 50 **is the worst performer.**
- The **biggest improvers since 2018** are UP, Odisha, and Sikkim.
- The **maximum gains been made in** Goals 6 (clean water and sanitation), 9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure) and 7 (affordable and clean energy).



- However, nutrition and gender equality continue to be problem areas for India, requiring a more focused approach from the government.
- All three states that were in the 'Aspirant' category - Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Assam - have graduated to the 'Performer' category.
- Five states - Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Goa, and Sikkim - moved up from the 'Performer' category to the 'Front Runner' category.

### 6.3. POPULATION RESEARCH CENTRES (PRCS)

#### Why in news?

Recently the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare organised a National Workshop for Population Research Centres (PRCs).

#### Population Research Centres (PRCs)

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has established the **network of 18 Population Research Centres spread over 17 major States/UTs**.
- The PRCs are **autonomous** in nature and administratively under the control of their host **University/Institutions**.
- **Functions undertaken by PRCs-**
  - Undertake research projects relating to family planning, demographic research, and biological studies & qualitative aspect of population control, **to gainfully utilize the feedback from these research studies for plan formulation, strategies and policy interventions** of ongoing schemes at the national and state levels.
  - Involved in other studies given by Ministry such as **Concurrent Evaluation of NRHM** conducted by the Ministry throughout the country during 2008-09, **large scale sample surveys** of the Ministry like District Level Household survey (**DLHS**), National Family Health Survey (**NFHS**) and Longitudinal Ageing Study in India (**LASI**).
- They **are provided 100 per cent central assistance** in the form of grant-in-aid on a year-to-year basis.

### 6.4. NEW FOOD PACKAGING NORMS

#### Why in news?

Recently, the FSSAI has updated the food packaging norms.

#### Details

- The new guidelines on food packaging under the **Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, 2011**, will come into force in July 2019.
- All food businesses shall comply with the new norms.
- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has banned the use of newspapers, recycled papers, cardboards and plastic sheets/ recycled plastic to wrap food directly.
- The guidelines take into account the carcinogenic effect of newsprint ink and dyes.
- They also reference **specific Indian Standards for printing inks** for use on food packages. Schedule IV of the regulations is a list of suggested packaging materials for different food product categories.
- It also provides that:
  - Any material which comes in direct contact with food or likely to come in contact with food used for packaging, preparation, storing, wrapping, transportation and sale or service of food shall be of food grade quality.
  - **Tin containers once used, shall not be re-used** for packaging of food.
  - The regulations also specify that **food packaging materials must now comply with Indian Standards (IS)** listed in Schedules I, II, and III for paper and paperboard materials, metal and metal alloys, and plastic materials, respectively. Previously, compliance with the standards was voluntary.
  - They include both **general and specific requirements for packaging materials**. In particular, they prescribe an overall migration limit of 60 mg/kg or 10 mg/dm<sup>2</sup> and specific migration limits for certain contaminants in plastic packaging materials.
    - ✓ Plastic materials and articles shall not release the substances in quantities exceeding the specific migration limit.
    - ✓ Various chemicals that migrate from plastic materials in contact with articles of food include: **barium, cobalt, copper, iron, lithium, manganese and zinc**.

## 6.5. REPORTS AND INDEXES

<p><b>World Migration Report 2020</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Released by: <b>International Organization for Migration (IOM)</b></li> <li><b>Key findings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>number of international migrants in 2019</b> is estimated at 270 million and the top destination remains the US, at nearly 51 million.</li> <li><b>India continues to be the largest country of origin of international migrants, with 17.5 million diaspora</b>, followed by Mexico, and China.</li> <li>The <b>top three remittance recipients:</b> India (\$78.6 billion) followed by China and Mexico.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>About IMO</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Established in 1951, IOM</b> is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. <b>India is one of its 173 members.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Global Livability Index</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is an <b>annual index</b> which ranks global cities according to their living conditions.</li> <li>The index is released by the <b>Economist's Intelligence Unit.</b></li> <li>It is based on 30 indicators covering five broad categories– <b>stability (25%), healthcare (20%), culture and environment (25%), education (10%) and infrastructure (20%)</b></li> <li><b>New Delhi and Mumbai ranked 118th and 119th</b> out of 140 cities in the Global Liveability Index, 2019. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the 2018 index New Delhi and Mumbai ranked 112th and 117th respectively.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Vienna retained its position</b> as the world's most liveable city in the Global Liveability Index, 2019.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Global Social Mobility Index</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Released by: <b>World Economic Forum (WEF)</b></li> <li><b>It is designed</b> to provide policy-makers with a means to identify areas for improving social mobility and promoting equally shared opportunities in their economies, regardless of their development.</li> <li>The WEF's Global Social Mobility Index assesses the <b>82 economies on "10 pillars"</b> spread across the following five key dimensions of social mobility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education (access, quality and equity, lifelong learning);</li> <li>Technology;</li> <li>Work (opportunities, wages, conditions);</li> <li>Protection and Institutions (social protection and inclusive institutions).</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Key Findings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Denmark holds the first place</b> followed by Norway, Finland and Sweden.</li> <li><b>India ranks 76th out of 82 economies.</b> It ranks 41st in lifelong learning and 53rd in working conditions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## 6.6. AWARDS

<p><b>Nari Shakti Puraskar</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Women and Child Development recently invited applications for the Nari Shakti Puraskar for the year 2019.</li> <li>They are conferred by the <b>President</b> of India every year on 8th March, the <b>International Women's Day</b> to <b>individuals, groups, institutions or NGOs</b> in recognition of their exceptional and outstanding work in economic and social empowerment of women.</li> <li>It may be awarded to individuals, groups, institutions or NGOs who have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraged women to participate in decision making roles.</li> <li>Encouraged women's skill development in traditional and non-traditional sectors.</li> <li>Facilitated basic amenities for rural women.</li> <li>Promoted women in sectors like science and technology, sports, art, culture etc.</li> <li>Significantly worked towards safety and security, education, health and wellness etc for women.</li> </ul> </li> <li>They were <b>formerly known as Stree Shakti Puraskar.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>National Florence Nightingale Award</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recently, the National Florence Nightingale Award 2019 was awarded to 36 awardees.</li> <li>Lini Puthuserry was awarded posthumously who <b>passed away while on duty</b> caring for a NIPAH infected patient in Kerala.</li> <li>These awards <b>were instituted in the year 1973</b> by the Government as a <b>mark of recognition for the</b></li> </ul>





	<p><b>meritorious services rendered by nurses to the society.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The 2019 awards have been transferred by the Ministry of Health &amp; Family Welfare (Nursing Section) to Indian Nursing Council.</li><li>• Florence Nightingale, (also called as Lady with the Lamp), was a</li></ul>
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	<p>British nurse, statistician, and social reformer who was the foundational philosopher of modern nursing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The WHO has also announced <b>2020 as the year of the nurse and mid-wife</b>. 2020 will also mark the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale.</li></ul>
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