

**NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC****Children Abandoning Education in Mica Mining Districts**

The survey on 'education & well-being of children in mica mining areas of Jharkhand and Bihar' has revealed that over 5,000 children, in the age group of six to fourteen, have left schools to work as labourers to supplement their family income.

- This survey was conducted by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) from May 2018 after a report by Terre Des Hommes (an international development agency) revealed that more than 22,000 children are employed as child labourers in the mica mining areas of Jharkhand and Bihar.
- The survey was conducted in the districts of Koderma and Giridih in Jharkhand and Nawada district in Bihar.

**Key Findings**

- 4,545 children, in the age group of six to fourteen years, in the area of Jharkhand, were reported as not attending schools.
- 649 children were reported as not attending schools in Nawada district of Bihar.
- Reasons: Lack of enough opportunities, lack of interest and mica scraps collection.
  - Several families do not see the benefit of sending their children to school and instead prefer them working in collecting and selling mica scraps.
  - Selling mica scraps is the main means of livelihood for many families in these districts.
- Malnourishment: In case of Giridih and Koderma, the undernutrition cases reported in 14% and 19% of the habitations and villages, respectively in the survey area. In case of Nawada, 69% habitations have reported that some children are undernourished.

**Recommendations:**

- NGOs/development agencies should work with the local and district administration as well as with the industries to chalk out a strategy to make the supply chain of mica mining, free of child labour.
- There should be a strict action against buyers of mica scraps from children.
- A special drive to abolish child labour in the mica mining areas of Jharkhand and Bihar should be carried out by the administration.
- Rehabilitation centres for such children and residential schools for girls in the areas, should be opened.
- The districts need to ensure proper implementation of child right laws.

**National Commission for Protection of Child Rights**

- NCPCR is a statutory body set up in March 2007 under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005.
- It is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women & Child Development.
- The Commission's mandate is to ensure that all laws, policies, programmes, and administrative mechanisms are in consonance with the child rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- It inquires into complaints relating to child's right to free and compulsory education under the Right to Education Act, 2009.
- It monitors in the implementation of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.

**GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.****Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana**

The Supreme Court has slammed the Centre for harassing Dev Narayan Mishra, a 90-year-old freedom fighter by filing repeated appeals in higher courts to deny him a freedom fighter's pension under the Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana (SSSY).

**Timeline:**

- Government of India introduced the 'Ex-Andaman Political Prisoners Pension Scheme' in 1969 to honour the freedom fighters who had been incarcerated in the Cellular Jail at Port Blair.

- In 1972, to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of Independence, a regular scheme for grant of freedom fighters' pension was introduced.
- Since 1980, a liberalized scheme, namely the 'Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme, 1980' is being implemented.
- From the financial year 2017-18 onwards, the nomenclature of the Scheme has been changed as 'Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana'.

**Overview:**

- The scheme provides for a monthly Samman Pension to freedom fighters, as a token of respect for their contribution in the national freedom struggle.
- On their demise, pension is provided to their eligible dependents viz. spouses and thereafter, unmarried and unemployed daughters and dependent parents, as per prescribed eligibility norms and procedure.
- As of March 2019, a total 1.7 lakh freedom fighters and their eligible dependents have been sanctioned the central samman pension so far.
- It is implemented by Ministry of Home Affairs (Freedom Fighters Division).

**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS**

**India-Bahrain**

The Prime Minister of India, during his visit to Bahrain, launched a USD 4.2 million redevelopment project of the 200-year-old Lord Sri Krishna temple in the Bahraini capital, Manama.

- This is the first time that an Indian Prime Minister has visited Bahrain.
- The heritage and the 200-year-old legacy of the Shreenathji (Shree Krishna) temple in Manama will be highlighted in the redevelopment and the new iconic complex will house the sanctum sanctorum and prayer halls.
- India and Bahrain also agreed to enhance cooperation in the field of security and counter-terrorism.
  - In a joint statement, both the countries urged the international community to reject terrorism infrastructures and to cut off any kind of support to the terrorists.
- An MoU was also signed between BENEFIT, a Bahrain company handling ATM and POS transactions among others, and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) for launch of RuPay card.
- The two countries also signed MoUs on cultural exchange programme, space technology, solar energy.
- India welcomed the interest of Bahrain to join the International Solar alliance (ISA).
- Both the sides also emphasised on the urgent need to pursue UN reforms, including the Security Council through an expansion of both categories of its membership, to make it more representative and effective in tackling global challenges.

**IMF's Special Data Dissemination Standard**

According to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF), "Annual Observance Report of the Special Data Dissemination Standard for 2018", India failed to comply with multiple requirements prescribed in the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).

- The IMF launched the SDDS initiative in 1996 to guide members to enhance data transparency and help financial market participants with adequate information to assess the economic situations of individual countries.
- There are over 20 data categories which IMF considers for this report to capture a nation's economic health including national accounts (GDP, GNI), production indices, employment, and central government operations.
- India subscribed to the SDDS on December 27, 1996.
- India held that its non-compliance with IMF standards is one-off event due to technical glitches in the National Summary Data Page (NSDP) web page.
  - National Summary Data Page (NSDP) provides quick access to a single comprehensive source of economic and financial data.

**INDIAN ECONOMY****Panel on Power Reforms**

The Centre has formed a high-level group to make recommendations for changing the structure and system of power sale and purchase in the country.

Led by the Special Power Secretary - Sanjiv Nandan Sahai, the group will recommend reforms needed in Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) and for increasing competitiveness in the power markets.

The Panel has been given six months for submitting its recommendations.

**Problems within the Power Sector**

- Power sector has witnessed a huge growth in terms of capacity addition during the last few years but it is reeling under stress as the mismatch in demand and supply, has led to stressed power assets or non-performing assets (NPAs).
  - About 34 power plants in the country amount to about Rs.1.40 lakh crore NPAs.
- Reasons behind huge NPAs: Capacity addition without tied-up PPAs with Distribution Companies (DISCOMs), coal supply issues, the inability of DISCOMs to pay to generators, regulatory issues, the inability of promoters to infuse equity, tardy implementation etc.
  - Power distribution companies have historically entered into long term PPAs with the generating firms for the supply of power and appropriate regulatory commissions determine tariffs.
- Volatility of Prices in Power Trading: The power procured from power exchanges consists of around 3-4% of total power procured in the country. The comparatively smaller proportions of power procured through power exchanges result in lower depth and higher volatility of power prices in the power exchanges.

**Advisory Board for Banking Frauds (ABBF)**

The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has constituted an 'Advisory Board for Banking Frauds (ABBF)' to examine bank fraud of over Rs.50 crore and recommend action.

- It is headed by the former Vigilance Commissioner, T.M. Bhasin.
- Besides the chairman, the Board consists of three other members. The tenure of the Chairman and members would be for a period of two years from 21st August, 2019.
- Headquartered in Delhi, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will provide required secretarial services, logistic and analytical support along with the necessary funding to the board.

**Functions**

- The four-member board's jurisdiction would be confined to those cases involving the level of officers of General Manager and above in the Public Sector Banks in respect of an allegation of fraud in a borrowal account.
- It would function as the first level of examination of all large fraud cases before recommendations or references are made to the investigative agencies by the respective public sector banks (PSBs).
- Lenders would refer all large fraud cases above Rs.50 crore to the board and on receipt of its recommendation or advice, the bank concerned would take further action in such matter.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation may also refer any case or matter to the board where it has any issue or difficulty or in technical matters with the PSB concerned.
- It would also periodically carry out frauds analysis in the financial system and give inputs for policy formulation related to the fraud to the RBI.

**ISSUES RELATED TO INTERNAL SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT****Naga Peace Process**

A Naga extremist group (NSCN-IM) has for the first time said a "separate flag and Constitution" were necessary for an "honourable solution" to the 22-year-old Naga peace process.

- The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) had signed a Framework Agreement with Union Government in August 2015.
- The peace process began when NSCN-IM announced cease fire in 1997 and framework agreement was believed to have taken that process to a critical stage. However, both the Centre & the outfit has not divulged the contents of the agreement

- The Khaplang faction of the NSCN ceased to be a part of the peace process after it walked out of a 14-year-old truce in March 2015.
- The Khaplang faction is primarily based in Myanmar while most of the leaders and cadres of the Isak-Muivah group are from Manipur.
- The Centre had a year ago insisted that the peace process would be incomplete if at least six other Naga extremist groups, some of whom are dormant, were not taken on board the negotiations.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC**

### **Gravitational Lensing**

USA's space agency NASA is planning to launch James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) in 2021, which will use a natural phenomenon called "gravitational lensing" to carry out astronomical observations.

- JWST will study every phase in the history of our Universe, ranging from the first luminous glows after the Big Bang, to the formation of solar systems capable of supporting life on planets like Earth, to the evolution of our own Solar System, etc.
- For achieving this objective NASA has launched a program called Targeting Extremely Magnified Panchromatic Lensed Arcs and Their Extended Star Formation, or TEMPLATES.

### **Gravitational Lensing**

- The phenomenon of gravitational lensing occurs when a huge amount of matter, such as a massive galaxy, cluster of galaxies or a black hole, creates a gravitational field that distorts and magnifies the light from objects behind it.
- Gravitational lensing is based on Einstein's theory of general relativity (Mass bend light).
- Normal lenses such as the ones in a magnifying glass work by bending light rays that pass through them in a process known as refraction, in order to focus the light somewhere else.
- Similarly, the gravitational field of a massive object causes light rays passing close to that object to be bent and refocused somewhere else.
- The more massive the object, the stronger its gravitational field and hence the greater the bending of light rays - just like using denser materials to make optical lenses results in a greater amount of refraction.
- In effect, gravitational lenses act like natural cosmic telescopes.
- The effect allows researchers to study the details of early galaxies too far away to be seen otherwise with even the most powerful space telescopes.
- However, gravitational lensing is very rare as it requires a distant star, black hole and the observer on earth to be well-aligned.
- Also, it can help astronomers to know about black holes, dark matter, etc.

### **CSIR-National Physical Laboratory**

Recently, the Union Environment Ministry has designated the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL) as national verification agency for certifying instruments and equipment for monitoring emissions and ambient air.

- CSIR-NPL shall develop the necessary infrastructure, management system, testing and certification facilities conforming to international standards.
- After launching of National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), there has been a boom in equipment for real-time monitoring of air quality.
- NCAP envisages 20-30% reduction in PM 2.5 (fine, respirable pollution particles) by 2024 and PM 10 (coarse pollution particles) concentration in 102 non-attainment cities over 2017 levels.
- Currently, New Delhi leads the numbers of cities in air quality sensors, with around 35 of them.

### **CSIR- National Physical Laboratory of India**

- The CSIR- National Physical Laboratory of India, situated in New Delhi, is the measurement standards laboratory of India.
- It maintains standards of SI units in India and calibrates the national standards of weights and measures.

- The National Physical Laboratory was conceptualized in 1943 by the Governing Body of CSIR, with a view to make science and technology as a means for industrial growth and development.
- Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone for the laboratory on January 4, 1947.

### **DEFENCE & SECURITY**

#### **Special Protection Group (Spg)**

According to several sources, the Government of India is likely to withdraw the SPG from former PM Manmohan Singh's security. If this happens, then SPG would be tasked with protecting only PM Modi, Congress president Sonia Gandhi and her children Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

#### **About:**

- It is an armed force of the Union for providing proximate security to the following
  - Prime Minister (PM) of India,
  - Former PM of India and
  - Members of their immediate families wherever they are.
- It was formed in 1985 after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as an executive body on the recommendation of Birbal Nath committee.
- Later on it became a statutory body under Special Protection Group Act, 1988.
- It is governed by Cabinet secretariat of India.
- SPG chief is an officer of the rank of inspector-general.
- Tenure of security cover to former PM: SPG Security is provided to former PM and the members of his immediate family for a period of one year from the date on which the former PM ceased to hold office and beyond one year based on the level of threat as decided by the Central Government.
- However, the security to them can be extended in case the threat is of grave and continuing nature.
- Initially, SPG provided security to PM only, but after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, the SPG Act was amended in 1991 to provide security to former PMs and their immediate families.
- Former PMs, their immediate family members, and family members of a serving Prime Minister may, if they choose, decline SPG security.

### **MISC**

#### **Concussion**

In the second Ashes cricket Test match (2019), Marnus Labuschagne became the first ever "concussion substitute" and in fact, the first ever substitute player to bat in a Test innings.

#### **About:**

- The 4th International Conference on "Concussion in sport" held in Zurich in 2012, defined concussion as a brain injury that may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an 'impulsive' force transmitted to the head.
- Concussion temporarily affects brain functioning. Its symptoms could include loss of consciousness, memory loss, headaches, difficulty with thinking, concentration or balance, nausea, blurred vision, sleep disturbances and mood changes.
- Following the death of Australian cricketer Phillip Hughes, who was hit on the head by a bouncer in a Sheffield Shield first class match in 2014, the International Cricket Council (ICC), in July 2019, approved player replacement in the case of concussion in cricket.
- Several other sports – basketball, ice hockey, rugby, football – have also instituted specific concussion-related protocols.

### **QUOTE OF THE DAY**

**When you can't change the direction of the wind- change your sails.**



## **DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Qns:** Child Labour is a social evil. Examine its causes and suggest some possible solutions for its prevention and eradication.

**Ans:**

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines child labour as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and mental development. However, children or adolescents who participate in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling, is not child labour. Example: helping their parents at home, assisting family or earning pocket money outside school hours and on holidays.

### **Causes of Child Labour:**

- **Poverty and Indebtedness:** Poverty is the greatest cause of child labour. For impoverished households, income from a child's work is usually crucial for his or her own survival or for that of the household. Children are also bonded to labour due to a family indebtedness. Rural poverty and urban migration also often exposes children to being trafficked for work.
- **Adult unemployment and under-employment:** high prevalence of adult unemployment and under-employment often force children to work to support family.
- **Illiteracy and Ignorance of child's parents:** Illiteracy of the child's parents further worsens the situation. Illiteracy and Lack of awareness of the harmful effects of child labour make them violate the law and put their children under the risk of inhuman exploitation.
- **Lack of access to basic and meaningful quality education and skills training:** The prevailing educational infrastructure is highly unsuitable to children of economically deprived families. Further deplorable quality of education has led to increasing dropout rates and forced children into child labour.
- **Compulsory education does not cover 15-18 age group.** However, being illiterate or school dropouts, these children are vulnerable and often exploited as part of informal, unskilled and casual workforce.
- **Demand for child labour:** Increasing demand for child labour especially in urban areas is an important reason of prevalence and increase in child labour. Children are employed because they are cheap and flexible according to the demands of the employer and not aware of their rights.
- **Cultural factors:** An expectation that children should contribute to the socioeconomic survival of the family and community, as well as the existence of large families contribute to prevalence of child labour. Children often take up family's traditional work from an early age. For example, a Goldsmith's son takes to gold-smithery, or a carpenter's child takes up carpentry from an early age
- **Social factors:** There is a strong correlation between India's differentiated social structure and child labour. The majority of child labourers in India belong to the so called lower castes (SCs), the tribal and Muslim religious minority.

### **Way Ahead:**

- Child labour is a vicious circle of poverty, unemployment, underemployment and low wages. There should be concerted effort towards social protection programmes and cash transfers to improve the economic situation of families and to reduce the "need" to send children to work
- There is urgent need to revamp educational infrastructure- to ensure access to educational institutions, improvement in quality and relevance of education
- There is a need to bring uniformity in existing Indian laws dealing with child labour. The laws must expand the definition of a child by prohibiting the employment of and ensuring free and compulsory education (RTE, Act, 2009) for children below 18 years
- There is need to launch a national campaign to invoke public interest and large-scale awareness on exploitation of children and the menace of child labour.
- Government should take adequate measures to raise awareness among families and communities. Parental literacy can play an important role in ensuring the rights of children are upheld.
- Elimination of child labour demands commitment from the society e.g. family, state, civil society and those who employ children in any enterprises
- Many NGOs like Bachpan Bachao Andolan, ChildFund, CARE India, Talaash Association, Child Rights and You, Global march against child labour, RIDE India, Child line, Kailash Satyarthi Children Foundation etc. have been working to eradicate child labour in India.

## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQ**

1. T M Bhasin panel, recently seen in news, is related to:
  - (a) **examine bank fraud of over 50 crore rupees and recommend action.**
  - (b) examine the aspects of corporatisation of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB).
  - (c) draft New Direct Tax Legislation (Law).
  - (d) None of the above.
2. What is concussion, recently seen in news?
  - (a) **An injury to the brain that results in temporary loss of normal brain function.**
  - (b) It watching multiple episodes of (a television program) in rapid succession
  - (c) A very large mass of solid waste in a sewerage system.
  - (d) The compulsive desire to check or accumulate news and information, typically via mobile phone or computer.
3. Recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been conferred the King Hamad Order of the Renaissance by which of the following countries?
  - (a) UAE
  - (b) Qatar
  - (c) Saudi Arabia
  - (d) **Bahrain**
4. With reference to the Gravitational Lensing, consider the following statements:
  1. It is a natural phenomenon that magnifies light around galaxies.
  2. The NASA program aimed at using gravitational lensing via its Webb telescope is called "Targeting Extremely Magnified Panchromatic Lensed Arcs and Their Extended Star Formation (TEMPLATES)".

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) **Both 1 and 2**
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. With reference to air quality monitoring sensors, consider the following statements:
  1. The Central Government has designated the CSIR-NPL as national verification agency for certifying instruments and equipments for monitoring emissions and ambient air.
  2. The Central Government launched a National Clean Air Campaign to reduce particulate matter (PM) pollution by 20%-30% in all cities by 2024.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

  - (a) **1 only**
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. With reference to the 'Swatantrata Sainik Samman Yojana', consider the following statements:
  1. Since 1980, a liberalized scheme, namely the 'Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme, 1980' is being implemented.
  2. The scheme provides for a monthly Samman Pension to freedom fighters, as a token of respect for their contribution in the national freedom struggle.
  3. It is implemented by the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

  - (a) **1 and 2 only**
  - (b) 2 and 3 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
7. With reference to the Special Protection Group (SPG), consider the following statements:
  1. It is an armed force of the Union for providing proximate security only to the Prime Minister (PM) of India and former PM of India.
  2. It was formed in 1985 after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as an executive body on the recommendation of Birbal Nath committee. Later on it became a statutory body under Special Protection Group Act, 1988.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) **2 only**
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Consider the following statements:
  1. The World Bank launched the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) initiative in 1996.
  2. SDDS guides members to enhance data transparency and help financial market participants with adequate information to assess the economic situations of individual countries.
  3. India subscribed to the SDDS in 1996.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) 1 and 2 only
  - (c) **2 and 3 only**
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3