

NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC**Missing Children And Women**

The highest number of women and children who go missing in the country are from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh respectively, according to a study by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

About:

- The NCRB study was based on the annual Crime in India Report compiled by the agency for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- According to the report, the States where the highest number of women went missing in the three years are Maharashtra, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. In 2016, as many as 28,316 women went missing in Maharashtra, followed by 29,279 in 2017, and 33,964 in 2018.
- In 2016-18, a total of 63,407, 63,349 and 67,134 children were reported missing across the country. The study said that in Madhya Pradesh, Indore reported the highest number of missing children, with 596 in 2017 and 823 in 2018.

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008**

The Supreme Court has directed the states, which are yet come out with notifications for establishing Gram Nyayalayas, to do so within four weeks.

About:

- The Supreme Court also took into account the fact that several states have issued notifications for establishing Gram Nyayalayas but all of them were not functioning except in Kerala, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.
- Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008 is an Act of Parliament enacted for establishment of Gram Nyayalayas or village courts for speedy and easy access to justice system in the rural areas of India.
- Sections 5 and 6 of the 2008 Act provide that state government in consultation with the high court will appoint a 'Nyayadhikari' for each 'Gram Nyayalaya', who will be a person eligible to be appointed as a Judicial Magistrate of the First Class.
- The Gram Nyayalayas have both civil and criminal jurisdiction over the offences and nature of suits specified in the First, Second and Third schedule of the Act.

GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.**Santusht**

Union Minister for Labour and Employment informed Lok Sabha about the Santusht.

About:

- 'Santusht' - Implementation Monitoring Cell (IMC) has been constituted in the Office of Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour and Employment in January 2020.
- The objective of 'Santusht' is to promote transparency, effective delivery of public services and implementation of policies, schemes of Ministry of Labour at grassroot level through constant monitoring.

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

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated Maldives on rejoining the Commonwealth. Maldives had left the Commonwealth under the previous Yameen administration in 2016.

About:

- The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 54 independent and equal sovereign states, nearly all of them former territories of the British Empire.
- Headquarters: London, United Kingdom.
- Background: The current Commonwealth of Nations was formally constituted by the London Declaration in 1949.

Member countries:

- 54 countries are members of the Commonwealth with Maldives becoming the 54th member of Commonwealth family.
- All members have an equal say – regardless of size or economic stature. This ensures even the smallest member countries have a voice in shaping the Commonwealth.
- Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM): Every two years, members meet to discuss issues affecting the Commonwealth and the wider world at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

Jebel Ali Gas Field

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) announced the discovery of a new natural gas field containing 80 trillion standard cubic feet of gas in the cross-border area of the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

About:

- The Jebel Ali gas field, spanning an area of 5,000 square kilometres in the cross-border area of the two emirates, represents one of the largest natural gas discoveries in the UAE.
- The discovery strengthens the UAE's position among countries with the world's largest natural gas reserves. This discovery will help UAE in transiting the gulf nation from a net importer of gas to a potential net exporter of gas in coming times.

Addu Tourism Zone

India and Maldives signed five MoUs for establishing the Addu Tourism zone in five islands of Addu atoll at a cost of 2.49 million dollars. A 6th MoU to set up a bottled water plant in Hoarafushi was also signed.

About:

- Addu Atoll, also known as Seenu Atoll, is the southernmost atoll of the Maldives.
- Administratively, Addu Atoll is the location of Addu City, one of the two cities of the Maldives. Addu City consists of the inhabited areas of Addu Atoll, namely the natural islands of Hulhudhoo, Meedhoo, Maradhoo, Feydhoo, and Hithadhoo.
- Addu Atoll, together with Fuvahmulah, extend the Maldives into the Southern Hemisphere.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC**Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes (SATHI)**

The Department of Science & Technology has launched a unique scheme called Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes (SATHI) to address the need for building shared, professionally managed and strong Science and Technology infrastructure in the country.

About:

- These Centres are expected to house major analytical instruments to provide common services of high-end analytical testing, thus avoiding duplication and reduced dependency on foreign sources. These would be operated with a transparent, open access policy.
- DST has already set up three such centres in the country, one each at IIT Kharagpur, IIT Delhi and BHU at a total cost of Rs 375 Cores. It is planned to set up five SATHI Centres every year for the next four years.
- SATHI will address the problems of accessibility, maintenance, redundancy and duplication of expensive equipment in our Institutions, while reaching out to the less endowed organizations in need, e.g., industry, MSMEs, startups and State Universities.

Live Attenuated Classical Swine Fever Vaccine (IVRI-CSF-BS)

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) released the Live attenuated Classical Swine Fever Vaccine (IVRI-CSF-BS) Technology developed by ICAR -Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Izatnagar.

About:

- Classical Swine Fever (CSF) is one of the most important diseases of pigs causing high mortality with annual loss of approx. Rs.4,299 billion.
- A lapinized CSF vaccine (Weybridge strain, UK) is being used in India since 1964 for controlling the disease. The vaccine is produced by sacrificing large numbers of rabbits for each batch.
- In order to do away sacrificing of rabbits and increase the productivity, IVRI has developed a new CSF Cell Culture Vaccine by attenuating an indigenous virulent CSF virus in cell culture.

- The vaccine is safe, potent, does not revert to virulence and provide protective immunity from day 14 of the vaccination till 24 months studied so far. The vaccine has been tested on around 500 pigs at multiple locations.
- The new vaccine will be part of the Government's One Health Initiative.

PRELIMS SPECIFIC FACTS- INDICES, DAYS, EVENTS, AWARDS ETC**World Cancer Day**

World Cancer Day 2020 is being observed on the 4th of February with the theme "I am and I will."

About:

- It is observed on the 4th of February every year by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) to create awareness about cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.
- In 2020, the celebration of World Cancer Day will see its 20th anniversary. On February 4, 2000, World Cancer Day was written into the Charter of Paris Against Cancer. The document was signed in between then French President and UNESCO General Director.

Related Info:

- The Union for International Cancer Control is a membership based, non-governmental organization that exists to help the global health community accelerate the fight against cancer. It was founded in 1933 and is based in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death globally. World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that cancer cases will rise by 81 percent in low and middle-income countries by 2040 because of a lack of investment in prevention and care.

Apeda-Cftri Liason Office, Guwahati

A MoU was signed by CSIR-CFTRI with APEDA to set up a Liaison Office in Guwahati, Assam to provide technical support to the food industries in the North East region.

About:

- Central Food Technological Research Institute, CSIR-CFTRI, Mysuru, (a constituent laboratory of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi) is a pioneering Institute working in the area of Food Science and Technology and Human Resource Development started during 1950.
- APEDA is an organization under Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India. It is responsible for promoting exports of Agriculture and Processed Food Products from India.

ODISHA DEVELOPMENT**OPSC Launches CSMS Web Portal To Bring Transparency In Recruitment Process**

The Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) in collaboration with National Informatics Centre (NIC) has launched its new web portal to enhance transparency and accountability in the recruitment process.

About:

- The new web portal (www.opsc.gov.in) supporting Comprehensive Selection Management System (CSMS) will upgrade the existing application management system and provide a platform to link all the stake holders like candidates, government departments and the examination conducting authorities with the OPSC to ensure seamless flow and exchange of information, queries, compliance and grievances,
- The CSMS will facilitate job aspirants of the State to register their interest to apply for various posts in government department. A unique Permanent Public Service Account Number (PPSAN) will be assigned to an applicant on first time registration for a post and his/her personal data is stored for making subsequent applications for other posts advertised by the Commission.
- The new system will reportedly help the Commission accomplish all recruitment related activities starting from receiving online requisitions from the government departments, advertisement management, receiving online applications from job aspirants, scrutiny of received applications, online question bank management, examination centres and logistics management, evaluation management including enrolment and selection of examiners, assessment of answer scripts, online document verification, and publication of Merit & Select Lists and recommending successful candidates to the Requisitioning/Appointing Departments for appointment.

- Besides, the CSMS has inbuilt audit and scrutiny system to ensure robustness and lack of interference from other agencies. The Commission further said that the technological initiative will reduce the entire recruitment process time to a great extent and enhance the transparency, accountability and delivery time substantially.
- Moreover, the Commission has decided to launch a mobile app to provide many important CSMS functionalities to the stakeholders on the move

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: The 73rd Amendment Act is a significant landmark in transforming the representative democracy into a participatory one. In this context, discuss the issues faced by the local self-government and suggest ways to make it an effective instrument of governance.

Answer

The 73rd constitutional amendment Act, 1992, established the third tier of governance and ensured local self-governance by granting constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). It is a significant step towards transforming representative democracy into grassroot participatory democracy. Since then it has become a constitutional mandate on the part of the states to make sure that local self-governments work properly. There was a considerable improvement in the working style, activities performing, public participation etc. It aims to fulfill Gandhiji's vision of Gram Swaraj.

Significance of PRIs/ Successes of LSGs in India

- Democratic Decentralization: The 73rd amendment made it mandatory that the people's representatives are directly elected.
- Inclusive Development: Participation of Women, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Backward Classes has increased in rural development. It gave voice to the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society through reservations for women, SCs and STs.
- Rural development: With the devolution of 29 of state subjects like agriculture, rural households etc., peoples' participation in the process of planning, decision-making, implementation and delivery system in rural India has been recognized. Effective public service delivery as per the needs of the local population through LSG allows for bottom-up approach. Example-MGNREGA.
- Grassroots participation: With the involvement of PRIs in implementing social sector schemes, Gram Panchayats and Gram Sabhas can now decide the types of work to be undertaken in the village and use of funds earmarked under the scheme.
- Political awareness: Sense of responsibility and political awareness has increased and consequent decrease in exploitation by the landlords, money-lenders and upper castes.
- Discarded archaic social institutes: It has lessened the importance of Caste Panchayats and political power is now less connected with the ownership of land.
- De-bureaucratization: The influence of bureaucracy has come down.

In this way, the 73rd amendment through PRIs has tried to transform representative democracy into participative one. But these local bodies face some issues in their effective functioning.

Shortcomings of LSGs in India:

- Most institutions are merely treated as agencies for implementation of government schemes, thus curtailing their functional autonomy. PRI depend on state funding for implementing the projects of rural development which hampers their independent functioning as third tier.
- Key administrative positions of district administration are manned by government officials, thus making them more bureaucratic in nature. According to the 14th finance commission, most of the functionaries are not made accountable to the local self-institutions.
- Reluctance of the State legislatures to devolve the functions listed in the 11th and 12th schedules.
- Delays in the constitution of State Finance Commission.
- The local bodies cannot even meet routine functions because the proceeds of various taxes are not available to them as they form part of the Consolidated Fund of the State.
- Lack of basic implementation and supporting infrastructure.
- Rationalization of laws, administrative procedures and systems has not kept pace with the constitutional sanction to local governance bodies.
- Dominance of caste, class and patriarchal outlook in these institutions.

- The constitution and central model act delegated the responsibility - of transferring functions to local bodies-to states. Most of the states are guilty of not transferring the functions and powers to the local level. Consequently, these institutions exist as over-structured but under-empowered organizations. Because of above problems still they are underperforming and not utilizing their full potential.

For realizing the progressive intent of constitutional provisions, following steps must be taken:

- Need to clearly define the functions for each level of local government in case of each subject matter.
- State Finance Commissions should evolve objective and transparent norms for devolution and distribution of funds.
- Capacity building efforts must attend to both the organization building requirements as also the professional and skills upgradation of individuals associated with these bodies.
- Decentralization from above must converge with decentralization from below by forging links between local bodies and informal associations and user groups.
- Government rules, administrative structures and procedures must make it easy for local bodies to carry out their mandated duties.
- States should devolve adequate powers, responsibilities and finances upon these bodies.
- State governments strengthen and constitute State Finance Commissions timely.
- Need to incorporate the concept of separate tax domain for the local bodies by introduction of local list and State-local concurrent list.
- Transfer of services of staff from State governments to the local bodies for catering to the manpower crunch.
- State governments should undertake the process of activity mapping of functions, finances and functionaries as recommended by Aiyar Committee.
- States should enable an environment for them to prepare plans and implement schemes for economic development and social justice.

Overall, the 73rd Amendment Act has helped in institutionalizing Participatory Democracy at the Local Level. The need of the hour is people's awareness and strengthening the system further to ensure a Genuine transition from representative democracy to a participative one.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

1. With reference to the Classical Swine Fever (CSF), consider the following statements:
 1. It is one of the most important diseases of pigs causing high mortality.
 2. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) recently released the Live attenuated Classical Swine Fever Vaccine (IVRI-CSF-BS) Technology developed by ICAR -Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Izatnagar.
 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
2. A MoU was signed by CSIR-CFTRI with APEDA to set up a Liaison Office in which of the following places to provide technical support to the food industries in the North East region?
 - (a) **Guwahati**
 - (b) Dimapur
 - (c) Kohima
 - (d) Agartala
3. Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes (SATHI) is an initiative of:
 - (a) **Union Ministry of Science & Technology**
 - (b) Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
 - (c) Union Ministry of Human Resource Development
 - (d) Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
4. Santusht, recently seen in news, is an initiative of:
 - (a) **Union Ministry of Labour and Employment**
 - (b) Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

- (c) Union Ministry of Human Resource Development
(d) Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
5. Jebel Ali gas field, recently seen in news is located in:
(a) United Arab Emirates (UAE)
(b) Qatar
(c) Saudi Arabia
(d) Iran
6. Addu Atoll also known as Seenu Atoll, recently seen in news is located in:
(a) United Arab Emirates (UAE)
(b) Maldives
(c) Sri Lanka
(d) Seychelles
7. With reference to the World Cancer Day 2020, consider the following statements:
1. The theme is "I am and I will".
2. It is observed on the 4th of February every year by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) to create awareness about cancer and to encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment.
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. With reference to the Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008, consider the following statements:
1. It is an Act of Parliament enacted for establishment of Gram Nyayalayas or village courts for speedy and easy access to justice system in the rural areas of India.
2. The Gram Nyayalayas have only civil jurisdiction over the offences and nature of suits specified in the First, Second and Third schedule of the Act.
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
9. With reference to the Commonwealth, consider the following statements:
1. It is a voluntary association of 54 independent and equal sovereign states, nearly all of them former territories of the British Empire.
2. The current Commonwealth of Nations was formally constituted by the London Declaration in 1949.
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
10. According to a study by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), in which of the following state the highest number of women went missing in the country?
(a) Maharashtra
(b) Odisha
(c) Punjab
(d) Bihar