

**NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC****Jaya Jaitly Task Force**

The Women and Child Development Ministry has constituted a task force to examine issues related to age of motherhood, lowering Maternal Mortality Rate and improvement of nutritional levels.

**About:**

The task force will be headed by Jaya Jaitly and it will submit its report by 31st July of next month.

**The Terms of Reference of the Task Force are as follows:**

- To examine the issues related to Infant Mortality Rate, Maternal Mortality Rate, Total Fertility Rate, Sex Ratio at Birth, Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and any other issues pertaining to health and nutrition.
- To suggest measures for promoting higher education among women.
- To suggest suitable legislations and amendments in existing laws and also chalk out a detailed roll-out plan with timelines to implement these recommendations.

**“Healthy And Energy Efficient Buildings” Initiative**

On occasion of World Environment Day, Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), in partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) MAITREE program, launched the “Healthy and Energy Efficient Buildings” initiative to make workplaces healthier and greener.

**About:**

- “Healthy and Energy Efficient Buildings” Initiative will address the challenges of retrofitting existing buildings and air conditioning systems so that they are both healthy and energy efficient.
- The Market Integration and Transformation Program for Energy Efficiency (MAITREE), under which this initiative has been launched, is a part of the US-India bilateral Partnership between the Ministry of Power and USAID. It is aimed at accelerating the adoption of cost-effective energy efficiency as a standard practice within buildings, and specifically focuses on cooling.

**Related Info :**

- Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a joint venture of PSUs under the administration of Ministry of Power, is working towards mainstreaming energy efficiency and is implementing the world’s largest energy efficiency portfolio in the country.

**GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.****Electronics Incentive Schemes**

Union Electronics and IT Minister announced three schemes, with a Rs. 48,000-crore outlay, for setting up of large number of electronic and mobile manufacturing units in the country.

Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing (outlay of nearly Rs. 41,000 crore)

- The PLI Scheme shall extend an incentive of 4% to 6% on incremental sales (over base year) of goods manufactured in India and covered under the target segments, to eligible companies, for a period of five years subsequent to the base year.

Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS) (outlay of about Rs.3,300 crore)

- The SPECS shall provide financial incentive of 25% on capital expenditure for the identified list of electronic goods, i.e., electronic components, semiconductor/ display fabrication units, Assembly, Test, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) units, specialized sub-assemblies and capital goods for manufacture of aforesaid goods.

Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) Scheme (about Rs.3,800 crore)

- The EMC 2.0 shall provide support for creation of world class infrastructure along with common facilities and amenities, including Ready Built Factory (RBF) sheds / Plug and Play facilities for attracting major global electronics manufacturers, along with their supply chains.

**Benefits**

- The Schemes will help offset the disability for domestic electronics manufacturing and hence, strengthen the electronics manufacturing ecosystem in the country.
- The three new schemes are expected to attract substantial investments, increase production of mobile phones and their parts to around 10 lakh crore by 2025. It will also generate around five lakh direct and 15 lakh indirect jobs.

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

At the virtual UK-hosted Global Vaccine Summit 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India will contribute \$15 million to an international vaccine alliance, GAVI.

### GAVI

- GAVI, officially Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is a public-private global health partnership with the goal of increasing access to immunisation in poor countries.
- GAVI has observer status at the World Health Assembly.
- It was founded in 2000 and is located at Geneva, Switzerland.
- The Vaccine Alliance brings together developing country and donor governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, the vaccine industry, technical agencies, civil society, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other private sector partners.

### Global Vaccine Summit 2020 London

- At the summit, GAVI launched the 'Gavi Advance Market Commitment for COVID-19 Vaccines (Gavi Covax AMC)', a new financing instrument aimed at incentivising vaccine manufacturers to produce sufficient quantities of eventual COVID-19 vaccines, and to ensure access for developing countries.
- The Gavi Covax AMC is being launched with an initial goal of raising US\$ 2 billion.

### Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS)

Retirement fund body, Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) said it has released Rs 868 crore pension along with Rs 105 crore arrear on account of restoration of commuted value of pension.

#### About:

- The government, had, in February this year notified the restoration of full pension after 15 years of retirement for pensioners who have commuted part of their pension at the time of retirement.
- This has resulted in a substantial increase in pension for those EPFO pensioners who retired before September, 26, 2008 and had opted for partial commutation of pension. Commutation of pension will cost the government Rs 1500 crore.
- The higher pension benefit will be restored after 15 years from the date of receiving commuted pension at the time of retirement. This means an individual who retired on April 1, 2005, would be eligible to receive the benefit of higher pension after 15 years i.e. from April 1, 2020.

#### Related Info:

- As per Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) rules, an EPFO member who retired before September 26, 2008 could get maximum one-third of pension as lump-sum i.e. commuted pension and remaining two-thirds was paid as monthly pension to an employee for his/her lifetime. As per current EPF rules, EPFO members do not have an option to receive the commutation benefit.
- EPFO is an organisation under labour ministry that administers EPF and EPS schemes.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has created a Rs 500-crore Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) to encourage acquirers to deploy Points of Sale (PoS) infrastructure — both physical and digital modes — in tier-3 to tier-6 centres and north eastern states.

#### About:

**Governance:** The PIDF will be governed through an Advisory Council and managed and administered by RBI.

#### Funding:

- RBI will make an initial contribution of ₹250 crore to the PIDF, covering half of the fund, while the remaining contribution will be from card-issuing banks and card networks operating in the country.
- The PIDF will also receive recurring contributions to cover operational expenses from card-issuing banks and card networks. RBI will also contribute to yearly shortfalls, if necessary.
- **Background:** The setting up of this fund is in line with the recommendations of the report of the committee on deepening of digital payments, chaired by Nandan Nilekani.
- **Need of PIDF:** Given the high cost of merchant acquisition and merchant terminalisation, most of the POS terminals in the country are concentrated in tier 1 and 2 cities and towns and other regions have been left out.

### Insolvency And Bankruptcy Code (IBC)

Union Government has promulgated an ordinance to amend Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

#### About:

- Under it, fresh insolvency proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) will not be initiated against companies for defaults due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Default on repayments from 25th of March, the day when the nationwide lockdown began to curb Corona virus infections, will not be considered for initiating insolvency proceedings for a period of six months, which could be extended to one year.
- It suspends sections 7,9 and 10 of the IBC for a period of 6 months with an enabling provision allowing for it to be extended upto 1 year.

Related Info :

- Under the IBC, an entity can seek insolvency proceedings against a company even if the default is only one day. This is subject to the minimum threshold of Rs 1 crore. Earlier, the threshold was Rs 1 lakh.

### **ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES**

#### **#iCommit**

Union Power Minister launched the ‘#iCommit’ initiative on the occasion of World Environment Day.

About:

- The initiative is a clarion call to all stakeholders and individuals to continue moving towards energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainability to create a robust and resilient energy system in the future.
- The ‘#iCommit’ initiative, driven by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), under the administration of Ministry of Power is uniting a diverse set of players such as Governments, Corporates, Multilateral and Bilateral Organisations, Think Tanks and Individuals.
- The initiative will also promote key undertakings of Government of India such as National Electric Mobility Mission 2020, FAME 1 and 2, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana etc.

#### **Nagar Van Scheme**

Union Environment Minister launched the Urban Forest program (Nagar Van scheme) on the occasion of World Environment Day.

About:

- In the initial phase, under this program, forests will be developed in 200 corporations and cities in the country across the country over the next five years.
- The scheme will be, in part, paid for by the CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016) funds.
- The forests were to come up either on existing forest land or on any other vacant land offered by urban local bodies.
- The Environment Minister highlighted the success of Wajre Urban forest in the city of Pune, Maharashtra which has been developed on a 40 acre degraded land area.

#### **Sixth Mass Extinction Crisis**

The ongoing sixth mass extinction may be one of the most serious environmental threats to the persistence of civilisation, according to new research published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (PNAS).

About:

- Names: This ongoing extinction of species, which coincides with the present Holocene epoch is known as Holocene extinction, Sixth extinction or Anthropocene extinction.
- Background: In the history of Earth we’ve had five major extinction events in the history of life.
- The five mass extinctions that took place in the last 450 million years have led to the destruction of 70-95 % of the species of plants, animals and microorganisms that existed earlier.
- The most recent was about 65 million years ago when an asteroid crashed into the Yucatán [Peninsula] and took out the dinosaurs, changing the climate dramatically.

#### **Sixth extinction vs earlier five extinctions**

- This ongoing extinction of species is a result of human activity. Earlier extinctions were caused by “catastrophic alterations” to the environment, such as massive volcanic eruptions, depletion of oceanic oxygen or collision with an asteroid.
- The current rate of extinction of species is estimated at 100 to 1,000 times higher than natural background rates.
- This large number of extinctions spans numerous families of plants and animals, including mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and arthropods.

### **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC NASOPHARYNGEAL (NP) SWAB**

The National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) Pune has successfully developed an indigenous nasopharyngeal (NP) swab for collecting samples from the throat cavity of patients affected with Corona Virus which causes the Covid-19.

About:

- The nasopharyngeal (NP) swab is a medical device with stringent specifications of quality, polymer grade, dimensions and sterilization. It consists of a cylindrical plastic stick with a brush-like tip of synthetic bristles/flocks.
- The flocking process helps align the fine bristles in a parallel orientation on the stick head, much like a tooth brush, except that this has round uniform geometry and the NP swab bristles are of micron diameter.
- The National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) Pune, a lab under the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), will manufacture one lakh nasopharyngeal swabs a day.

#### **PRELIMS SPECIFIC FACTS- INDICES, DAYS, EVENTS, AWARDS ETC**

##### **World Food Safety Day**

The second World Food Safety Day (WFSD) is being celebrated on 7 June 2020 under the theme “Food safety, everyone’s business”.

About:

- Background: WFSD was first celebrated in 2019, to strengthen commitment to scale up food safety made by the Addis Ababa Conference and the Geneva Forum in 2019 under the umbrella of “The Future of Food Safety”.
- Objective of the day: Through the World Food Safety Day, WHO in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) pursues its efforts to mainstream food safety in the public agenda and reduce the burden of foodborne diseases globally.
- Date of observance: Every year on 7 June.

#### **DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Q. In order to make a truly Atma Nirbhar Bharat, the economic stimulus needs to be complemented by bold reforms. Discuss.**

**Answer:**

The covid-19 pandemic has impacted the lives and livelihoods of the people. Thus, in order to revive the economic activity, the Government of India has announced an economic stimulus package of Rs 20 lakh crore. However, without bold reforms, especially in areas of 4L's: Land, Labour, Law and Liquidity, this economic package may not be able to put India's growth back on track.

Intended Goal and Associated Challenges

- The Rs 3 lakh crore collateral-free loan facility for MSMEs under the package will help this finance-starved sector and thereby provide a kickstart to the dismal state of the economy.
  - Amid migrant workers crisis, lack of demand, this credit facility is unlikely to achieve its intended goal.
- A slew of measures related to agriculture marketing like amending Essential commodities Act, APMC Act, promoting contract farming, have been announced.
- Since Agriculture is a state subject, cooperation amongst states and union is critical to implement these reforms.
- Apart from it, without augmenting the agriculture supply chain, these reforms may not bring the desired result.
- The government also intends to boost domestic manufacturing, by further liberalising FDI policy in the defence and aviation sector.
- The issues of land acquisition, labour laws and lack of credit due to the incomplete transmission of monetary policy, have acted as a roadblock in the path of India becoming a manufacturing hub.

Way Forward

- Immediate measures should be taken to revive the aggregate demand in the Indian economy. In this pursuit, the policy of emergency basic income for a short time may be a good option.
- In order to have success in revamping agriculture and doubling farmers' income, there is a need for cooperative federalism and augmenting agricultural infrastructure.
- There is a need for holistic reforms like addressing skill deficit, establishing a land bank, introducing innovative financing tools like InVITS, bringing labour reforms and improving ease of doing business.