

NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC**A model policy for women in the police**

- Women constitute about 7% of the police strength in India. This number is expected to rise, with many States and Union Territories providing for 30% (and more) reservation for women in the police in specific ranks. However, this is not enough.
- The discourse on mainstreaming women in the police by making policing inclusive, non-discriminatory and efficient in India is missing in policy circles.

Need for policies

- One way to mainstream women in the police is to develop a model policy that will challenge the deep-rooted patriarchy in the institution.
- Unfortunately, till now, not a single State police department has attempted to even draft such a policy.
- Thus, neither the Central nor State governments can get very far by merely adopting reservation to increase gender diversity without considering the need for policymaking.
- A model policy, while laying the foundation for equal opportunities for women in every aspect of policing, should also strive to create a safe and enabling work environment. Without this, all other efforts will remain piecemeal.

Steps needed to be taken

- One of the first steps to ensure a level playing field for women in the police is to increase their numbers.
- Merely providing reservation is not enough; police departments should develop an action plan to achieve the target of 30% or more in a time-bound manner.
- Departments should also undertake special recruitment drives in every district to ensure geographical diversity.
- To achieve the target, the police should reach out to the media and educational institutions to spread awareness about opportunities for women in the police.
- Current data reveal that most women in the police are concentrated in the lower ranks. Efforts should be made to change this. The impulse to create women-only battalions for the sake of augmenting numbers should be eliminated.
- Second, the model policy should strive to ensure that decisions on deployment of women are free of gender stereotyping to facilitate bringing women into leading operational positions.
- At present, there appears to be a tendency to sideline women, or give them policing tasks that are physically less demanding, or relegate them to desk duty, or make them work on crimes against women alone.
- Women police officers should be encouraged to take on public order and investigative crimes of all types, and should be given duties beyond the minimum mandated by special laws.
- Desk work too must be allocated evenly among men and women.
- Police departments still lack proper internal childcare support systems. Departments need to be mindful of this social reality and exercise sensitivity in making decisions on transfers and posting of women personnel.
- Women should be posted in their home districts in consultation with supervising officers.

Preventing Sexual Harassment at Work Place

- Police departments must also ensure safe working spaces for women and adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination and harassment, in order to make policing a viable career option for women.
- Departments are legally bound to set up Internal Complaints Committees to prevent sexual harassment at the workplace.
- Departments must operationalise the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013.

Conclusion

- Some of these suggestions have already been made by the National Conference of Women in Police. However, Central and State governments have not yet developed or adopted a comprehensive framework towards achieving substantive gender equality.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS
India gets first TIR shipment via Chabahar Port from Afghanistan

The first shipment under the United Nations 'Transports Internationaux Routiers' (TIR) convention arrived in India from Afghanistan through Iran's Chabahar Port.

Transports Internationaux Routiers

- India had joined the TIR Convention (the United Nations Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets) on June 15, 2017.
- The convention is adopted under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
- The convention allows goods to be outlined in a TIR carnet and sealed in load compartments.
- Customs officials verify the carnet and check the seals, with no need for physical checking of the contents, enabling shipments to pass through countries without being opened at borders.
- Reciprocal recognition of customs controls is at the heart of the Convention.
- This enables a facilitative and non-intrusive environment for multi-modal transport of goods through several countries.

Benefits of TIR

- The TIR convention will help in fast and easy movement of goods across multiple countries under a common customs document and guarantee.
- It will help boost India's exports and enable greater participation in the global value chains.
- TIR will play a pivotal role in improving ease of doing business and pave the way for smoother and safer transport of goods across international borders.
- It will help boost trade between India, Central Asia, Europe and Russia.

WHO strategy to fight flu pandemics

The World Health Organization has launched a strategy to protect people worldwide over the next decade against the threat of influenza, warning that new pandemics are "inevitable".

Global Influenza Strategy for 2019-2030
It aims to:

- Build stronger country capacities for disease surveillance and response, prevention and control, and preparedness.
- To achieve this, it calls for every country to have a tailored influenza programme that contributes to national and global preparedness and health security.
- Develop better tools to prevent, detect, control and treat influenza, such as more effective vaccines, antivirals, and treatments, with the goal of making these accessible for all countries.

Influenza epidemics

- WHO's new strategy, for 2019 through 2030, aims to prevent seasonal influenza, control the virus's spread from animals to humans and prepare for the next pandemic.
- The new strategy called for every country to strengthen routine health programmes and to develop tailor-made influenza programmes that strengthen disease surveillance, response, prevention, control, and preparedness.
- Influenza epidemics, largely seasonal, affect around one billion people and kill hundreds of thousands annually.

WHO recommends

- WHO recommends annual flu vaccines as the most effective way to prevent the spread of the disease, especially for healthcare workers and people at higher risk of influenza complications.
- It also called for the development of more effective and more accessible vaccines and antiviral treatments.
- Due to its mutating strains, vaccine formulas must be regularly updated and only offer limited protection currently.

Exercise Al Nagah III 2019

- It is a joint military exercise between Indian and Royal Army of Oman (RAO) held in Oman.
- The Indian side was represented by troops of Tenth Battalion The Garhwal Rifles Regiment.
- The exercise will see them hone their tactical and technical skills in joint counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations in semi-urban scenario in mountainous terrain under UN mandate.

- It will contribute immensely in developing mutual understanding and respect for each other's military as also facilitate in tackling the worldwide phenomenon of terrorism.
- Due emphasis will be laid on increasing interoperability between forces from both countries which is crucial for success of any joint operation.

INDIAN ECONOMY

Cabinet approves accession to three new agreements for IPR

The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for accession of India to:

- The Nice Agreement concerned with the International classification of Goods and Services for the purposes of registration of marks
- The Vienna Agreement establishing an International Classification of the figurative elements of marks
- The Locarno Agreement establishing an International classification for industrial designs.

About these agreements

- These are open to States party to the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (1883).
- Instruments of ratification or accession must be deposited with the Director General of WIPO.

Impact

- Accession to these will help the Intellectual Property Office in India to harmonize the classification systems for examination of trademark and design applications, in line with the classification systems followed globally.
- It would give an opportunity to include Indian designs, figurative elements and goods in the international classification systems.
- The accession is expected to instill confidence in foreign investors in relation to protection of IPs in India.
- The accession would also facilitate in exercising rights in decision making processes regarding review and revision of the classifications under the agreement.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES

Recent Report of Global Environmental Outlook:

Human activities are degrading the global environment at a pace that could endanger the "ecological foundations of society" and human health, according to a landmark United Nations report.

Global Environment Outlook (GEO) 2019

- The GEO is often referred to as UN Environment's flagship environmental assessment.
- The first publication was in 1997 and was originally requested by Member States.
- It is a flagship report because it fulfills the core functions of the organization, which date back to the UN General Assembly resolution that established the UNEP in 1972.
- The report is the sixth and is the UN's most comprehensive report on the state of the global environment since the fifth edition in 2012.

It is a consultative and participatory process to:

- prepare an independent assessment of the state of the environment,
- effectiveness of the policy response to address these environmental challenges and
- possible pathways to achieve various internationally agreed environmental goals.

Highlights of the report

Child Mortality

- Air pollution remains a major public health problem as the main environmental contributor to disease around the globe.
- It results in 6 million to 7 million premature deaths and losses of \$5 trillion each year.

Species Extinction

- Species extinction rates also continue to increase at a pace that could compromise Earth's ability to meet human needs, the report says.
- Among invertebrates, 42% of land dwellers, 34% of freshwater species and 25% of marine species are at risk of extinction.

Health emergencies

- The GEO compiles a litany of pollution-related health emergencies.

- It said that poor environmental conditions “cause approximately 25% of global disease and mortality” — around 9 million deaths in 2015 alone.
- Lacking access to clean drinking supplies, 1.4 million people die each year from preventable diseases such as diarrhoea and parasites linked to pathogen-riddled water and poor sanitation.

Food Waste

- Thirty-three percent of edible food is wasted worldwide, with more than half thrown out in industrialized nations, the report says.
- Food waste for instance, which accounts for 9% of global greenhouse gas emissions, could be slashed.
- The report depicts a growing chasm between rich and poor countries as rampant overconsumption, pollution and food waste in the developed world leads to hunger, poverty and disease elsewhere.

DEFENCE

Combat Casualty Drugs by DRDO

DRDO’s medical laboratory has come up with a range of ‘combat casualty drugs’ that can extend the golden hour of gravely wounded security personnel till the trooper is shifted to hospital.

Combat Casualty Drugs:

- The spectrum includes bleeding wound sealants, super absorptive dressings and glyceratedsalines, all of which can save lives in the event of warfare in jungle and high altitude areas as well as in terror attacks.
- Glycerated saline is a battlefield intravenous fluid that does not freeze till -18 degrees Celsius and is useful in handling trauma cases in high altitude areas. Glycerated saline, unlike normal saline, reduces inflammation. The drug can be lifesaving, particularly if the traumatic edema, collection of fluid in tissues and cavities of the body, is in the brain or lungs.
- A special medicated dressing material, in the kit, is 200 times more absorptive than normal dressings during bleeding wounds. These cellulose fibre-based dressings are more effective in stopping bleeding and keeping the wound clean. Additionally, antiseptics, antibiotics and curcumin can be impregnated in the dressing which acts as a slow drug release system.
- Chitosan gel helps in preventing blood loss by forming a film over the wound. Coupled with platelets and red blood cells aggregation, it stops the bleeding. Its antibacterial and wound health properties are of added benefit. Chitosan gel is suitable for sealing wounds by twin action: haemostasis by chemical action and filing action. It can be used for wounds on the limbs and also cavities such as abdomen and thorax.
- Part of the range is hypochlorous acid (HOCL), a disinfectant for troopers involved in jungle warfare. It is helpful in treating necrotisingfascitis, a rapidly progressing bacterial infection of soft tissues. Bacterial toxins cause local tissue damage and necrosis, as well as blunt immune system responses.

Significance and the need:

90% of gravely wounded security personnel succumb to injuries within a few hours. And the availability of proper medical facilities can extend this golden period and help save lives. Chances of survival and minimum disability are highest when effective first aid care is given within the golden hour.

The main battlefield emergencies are excess bleeding, sepsis, shock, hypovolemia (decreased blood volume) and pain. DRDO’s indigenously made medicines will be a boon for paramilitary and defence personnel during warfare.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.

HelenKeller