

NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC**Pencil Portal**

Union Minister for Labour has informed Lok Sabha that 361 Complaints of Child Labour have been resolved Through Pencil Portal.

PENCIL Portal:

- PENCIL portal stands for Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCIL). The portal is administered by the Ministry of Labour & Employment.
- It is an electronic platform to ensure effective enforcement of the provisions of the Child Labour Act and smooth implementation of the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme.
- The portal has five components namely (a) Child Tracking System, (b) Complaint Corner, (c) State Government, (d) National Child Labour Project and (e) Convergence.
- Since the subject of labour is in the concurrent list, the enforcement of the policy depends on respective state governments.
- This online portal aims to connect the Centre to the state government, district and to all project societies for effective implementation of NCLP.

NCLP: NCLP is a Central Sector Scheme for the rehabilitation of child labour. The Scheme seeks to adopt a sequential approach with focus on rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations & processes in the first instance.

National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK)

According to data available with the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK), Fifty workers have died cleaning sewers in the first six months of 2019.

Highlights

- This data includes figures for only eight states, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Punjab, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
- The data says that Railways is the largest employer of Safai Karamcharis and the problem of manual scavenging is nowhere as acute as it is in the Railways.
- The data feels that Swachh Bharat Abhiyan should not focus just on toilet building but also on eradication of manual scavenging or workers' rehabilitation.
- Tamil Nadu has recorded the highest numbers of such casualties, followed by Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Haryana.
- In terms of payment of mandatory compensation, Tamil Nadu has a better record of making payment.

Suggestions by the commission

- Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 should be amended to hold state government agencies and urban local bodies responsible for the deaths.
- States and municipalities should invest heavily in mechanized cleaning of sewers and septic tanks

About NCSK

- It was constituted in 1994 as a statutory body by an Act of Parliament i.e. 'National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993'.
- Initially, it was appointed for a period of three years i.e. up to 1997. However, later the period was extended consecutively.
- The commission recommends to the Central Government specific programs of action towards elimination of inequalities in status, facilities, and opportunities for Safai Karamcharis.
- It makes the reports to the Central or State Governments on any matter concerning Safai Karamcharis.
- It comprises of One Chairman (in the rank and status of the Union Minister for States), Four members, including a lady member (in the rank and status of the Secretary to the Government

of India) and Secretary (in the rank of Joint Secretary to Govt. of India) along with other supporting staff.

Government in process of finalising OTC drug policy

The practice of self-medication is rampant in India. Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs are medicines sold directly to a consumer without a need of prescription from a healthcare professional. In the absence of a legal framework, chemists are selling some commonly used 'prescription only' drugs like paracetamol as well as other drugs over the counter. Thus, lack of well-defined regulation for OTC medicines is impacting patient safety

- Drugs that are known to have negligible side effects can be classified as OTC so that access to them becomes easy and wide.
- When drugs for common viral infections, sore throat, acidity, indigestion, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, injury, cuts, wounds, burns, acne etc are made available under OTC, people will get access to the right medication

Concerns

- Rise of antibiotic resistance due to use of over-the-counter drugs
- An antibiotic is a drug meant to treat a bacterial infection.
- This will further strengthen the practice of self-medication

INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY

Scheme of Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India (SPPEL)

Government of India has initiated a Scheme known as 'Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India'.

About the scheme

- The scheme was instituted by Ministry of Human Resource Development in 2013.
- The sole objective of the Scheme is to document and archive the country's languages that have become endangered or likely to be endangered in the near future.
- The scheme is monitored by Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) located in Mysuru, Karnataka.
- The CIIL has collaborated with various universities and institutes across India for this mission.
- Under this Scheme, CIIL works on protection, preservation, and documentation of all the mother languages of India spoken by less than 10,000 speakers.
- These languages are identified as 'Endangered languages' because they are on the verge of extinction.
- Presently, 117 languages have been listed for the documentation.
- According to the criteria adopted by the UNESCO, a language becomes extinct when nobody speaks or remembers the language. It has categorized languages on basis of endangerment as follows:-
 - Vulnerable
 - Definitely Endangered
 - Severely Endangered
 - Critically Endangered

INDIAN ECONOMY

World Economic Outlook 2019 (July edition)

Recently the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has launched the July edition of 'World Economic Outlook 2019'.

Important stats

- The report has cut India's growth forecast for 2019-20 to 7% from its forecast in April of 7.3% on poor demand conditions.
- This edition also cut India's growth forecast in 2020-21 to 7.2% from the previous estimate of 7.5%.

- IMF has also cut its forecast for world GDP growth by 0.1 percentage point each in 2019 and 2020 to 3.2% and 3.5%.

About the Outlook

- It is a survey by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff usually published twice a year.
- It presents IMF staff economists' analyses of global economic developments during the near and medium-term.
- It forecasts include key macroeconomic indicators, such as GDP, inflation, current account and fiscal balance of many countries around the globe.
- It also deals with major economic policy issues.

IMF

- This organization aims to ensure the stability of the international monetary system i.e. the system of exchange rates and international payments that enables countries to transact with each other.
- It works towards,
 - Fostering global monetary cooperation
 - Securing financial stability
 - Facilitating international trade
 - Promoting high employment and sustainable economic growth
 - Reducing poverty around the world
- IMF is governed by and accountable to the 189 countries that make up its near-global membership.

PayPal mulls data localisation for India

American digital payments player PayPal has said that it is working with its partners on data localisation as mandated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Data localization:

- Data localisation is the act of storing data on any device physically present within the borders of a country. Localisation mandates that companies collecting critical data about consumers must store and process them within the borders of the country.
- In April 2018, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had asked payment firms to ensure their data are stored exclusively on local servers. RBI had also set a deadline of six months for compliance which some foreign firms such as MasterCard and Visa had missed.
- The main intent behind data localisation is to protect the personal and financial information of the country's citizens and residents from foreign surveillance and give local governments and regulators the jurisdiction to call for the data when required.
- Further, data localisation is essential to national security. Storing of data locally is expected to help law-enforcement agencies to access information that is needed for the detection of a crime or to gather evidence.

Rise in government borrowings might have triggered NBFC crisis

- RBI Deputy Governor has expressed the possibility that the rise in government borrowings might have led to the asset-liability mismatch in the non-banking financial companies (NBFC) sector.
- In the case of NBFCs, the ability to borrow long-term comes down when government borrowing rises increasing the risk of financial stability.
- This has led to the crisis in finance companies DHFL and IL&FS where the companies depended on short-term commercial paper to fund long-term loans.
- He has also warned on the consequences of elevated government borrowings which are (a) lesser availability of resources for private sector, (b) poor transmission of lower policy rates into market rates and (c) pressure on non-banking financial companies.
- The deputy governor has said that the borrowing could be reduced by government increasing its share of capital expenditure which stands at a low rate of 14% and divesting stake in public sector enterprises to bring in efficiencies and reduce debt.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES**Clean Air Initiative**

Recently the United Nations (UN) launched 'Clear Air Initiative' ahead of upcoming '2019 Climate Action Summit'.

About the initiative

- It is launched by the United Nations, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Environment Programme, and Climate and Clean Air Coalition.
- The initiative ask the governments at all levels to join the Initiative.
- It asks for the commitment of the government to achieve air quality that is safe for citizens
- Governments need to take the following actions,
 - Implementing air quality and climate change policies that will achieve the WHO Ambient Air Quality Guideline values.
 - Implementing e-mobility and sustainable mobility policies and actions with the aim of making a decisive impact on road transport emissions.
 - Assessing the number of lives that are saved, the health gains, and avoided financial costs to health systems that result from implementing their policies.
 - Tracking progress, sharing experiences and best practices through an international network supported by the Breathe life Action Platform'.

Need of urgent action

- According to the WHO, air pollution causes 7 million premature deaths each year, of which 600,000 are children.
- According to the World Bank, air pollution costs the global economy an estimated US\$5.11 trillion in welfare losses.
- In the 15 countries with the highest greenhouse gas emissions, health impacts of air pollution are estimated to cost more than 4% of GDP.

About UN

- It is an intergovernmental organization tasked with maintaining international peace and security , achieving international cooperation, and being a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.
- It was founded in 1945. It is currently made up of 193 Member States.
- It provides a forum for its members to express their views in the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and other bodies and committees.
- It is headquartered at New York, United States.

ODISHA DEVELOPMENT**Odisha Govt Approves 5-T Plan for Higher Education:**

With an aim to ensure better service delivery to public in Higher Education sector, Govt approved 5T action plan for the Higher Education Department. The 5Ts aim at achieving progress through Transparency, Teamwork, Technology, Time and Transformation.

Highlights:

- Creation of a 'Mo College' platform in line with State Government's 'Mo School' campaign to allow alumni and other interested individuals contribute to the development of the college.
- A new provision of income criteria in the existing guidelines for distribution of laptops among meritorious students every year.
- The Scholarship Guidelines will be changed and merit list prepared at district as well as block-level to ensure that all meritorious students from local areas get the benefit. A scholarship council will also be formed to maintain transparency in its distribution.
- The universities and colleges have been asked to excel in at least one or two subjects and work towards improving their ranking at national level to attract more students from across the country and abroad.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Rarest of all human quality is consistency.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: Discuss about the composition, various function and powers of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis.

Ans:

- The National Commission for Safai Karamchari was established in the year 1993 as per the provisions of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993, for a period of three years i.e. up to 31st March, 1997.
- As per Section 1 (4) of the Act, it was to cease to exist after 31st March 1997, however, validity of the Act was extended up to March, 2002, and then up to February, 2004 vide Amendment Acts passed in 1997 and 2001 respectively.
- The Act ceased to have effect from March 2004. After that the tenure of the NCSK has been extended as a non-statutory body from time to time (total of eight times) The tenure of the present Commission is up to March 2022.
- The Commission is a Non-Statutory body of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India.

Composition

- The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis comprises-
- one Chairman (in the rank and status of the Union Minister for States)
- 4 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).

Functions and Powers-

- Recommending the Central Government for specific actions that will help in elimination of inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities for Safai Karamcharis.
- Studying and evaluating the implementation of the programmes and schemes relating to the social and economic rehabilitation of Safai Karamcharis and scavengers.
- Investigating specific grievances and also taking suo-motu notice of matters relating to betterment and denial of any benefit to the Safai Karmchari and Manual Scavenger.
- Studying and monitoring the working conditions of Safai Karamcharis working under various kinds of employers (Government, Municipalities and Panchayats and other) and also making recommendations in this regard.
- Making reports to the Central or State Governments on matter concerning Safai Karamcharis.

After the enactment of “The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013”, the mandate and scope of the Commission has been enlarged. As per Section 31(1) of the Act, the Commission shall also perform the following functions, namely:-

- Monitoring the implementation of the Act and enquiring into complaints regarding contravention of the Act, and to convey its findings to the concerned authorities with recommendations.
- Advising the Central and the State Governments for effective implementation of the Act.
- To take suo motu notice of matter relating to non-implementation of the Act.
- Calling for information with respect to any matter specified above from any Government or local or other authority.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS BASED MCQS

1. Consider the following statements w.r.t the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis.
 1. It is a Constitutional Body.
 2. It functions under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
 3. It consists of one chairman and four members.
 Which of the statements is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 and 2
 - (b) 2 and 3**
 - (c) 1 and 3
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
2. Which of the following statement is incorrect w.r.t functions of National Commission for Safai Karamcharis
 - (a) Recommending the Central Government for specific actions that will help in elimination of inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities for Safai Karamcharis.
 - (b) Making reports to the Central or State Governments on matter concerning Safai Karamcharis.
 - (c) Investigating specific grievances and also taking suo-motu notice of matters relating to betterment and denial of any benefit to the Safai Karmchari and Manual Scavenger.
 - (d) None of the options is Incorrect.**
3. PENCIL portal aims to eradicate which social evil?
 - (a) Child labour**
 - (b) Caste discrimination
 - (c) Illiteracy
 - (d) Poverty
4. With reference to 'World Economic Outlook' which of the following statements is/are incorrect?
 1. It is released by the World Bank.
 2. According to the World Economic Outlook, July 2019, India's economy is projected to grow at 7% in 2019.
 3. July 2019 edition of the report has projected Global growth at 3.2% in 2019, picking up to 3.5% in 2020.
 Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - (a) 1 only**
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) 1 and 3
 - (d) 2 and 3
5. Which of the following categories are included in the new initiative called 'Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India'?
 1. Vulnerable
 2. Definitely Endangered
 3. Severely Endangered
 4. Critically Endangered
 Select the correct answer from the codes given below
 - (a) 1, 2 and 3
 - (b) 2, 3 and 4
 - (c) 1, 3 and 4
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4**
6. Which of the following may be the advantages of Data Localization?
 1. Provides Data Sovereignty
 2. Demands greater accountability from Tech Giants
 3. Beneficial for Data Centre Industries
 Select the correct answer using codes given below:
 - (a) 1 and 2
 - (b) 1 and 3
 - (c) 2 and 3
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3**
7. Which of the following statements w.r.t NBFCs is/are correct?
 1. NBFCs does not hold a banking license.
 2. NBFC can issue Demand Drafts like banks.
 Select the correct answer from codes given below
 - (a) 1 only**
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Which of the following organizations are stakeholders of the recently launched "Clear Air Initiative"?
 1. UNEP
 2. WHO
 3. Climate and Clean Air Coalition.
 Select the correct answer using codes given below:
 - (a) 1 and 2
 - (b) 1 and 3
 - (c) 2 and 3
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3**
9. Consider the following statements w.r.t The Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (CCAC).
 1. It was launched by the UNEP and Bangladesh, Canada, Ghana, Mexico, Sweden, and the United States
 2. It is headquartered in Paris
 Which of the statements is/are incorrect?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2**