

NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC**Manual Scavenging**

The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) reviewed the implementation of Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.

About:

- Of the 926 deaths inside sewers in the country, from 1993 till December 31, 2019, families of 172 victims were yet to receive compensation. Gujarat had the highest number of cases where the amount was not paid or the payment was unconfirmed (48), while Maharashtra was yet to pay or confirm payment of compensation in any of its 32 cases.
- A total of 53,598 people, of which 29,923 were in Uttar Pradesh alone, had been identified as engaged in manual scavenging after surveys in 2013 and 2018. One-time cash assistance had been disbursed in 35,397 cases, with Uttar Pradesh accounting for 19,385 such people.
- Capital subsidy and skill development training had been provided to 1,007 and 7,383 of the identified manual scavengers, respectively, the data showed.
- District Vigilance Committees had been constituted in 21 States/Union Territories, State Monitoring Committees in 26, and State Commissions for Safai Karamcharis in eight.

Levels And Trends In Child Mortality

The 'Levels and Trends in Child Mortality' report was released by the United Nations (UN) inter-agency group for child mortality.

Global scenario:

- A child or a young adolescent died every five seconds in 2018. The major causes of neonatal mortality are pre-term birth, intrapartum related events, and neonatal infection.
- Half of all under-5 deaths in 2018 occurred in five countries: India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia. India and Nigeria alone account for about a third.
- Current trends predict that close to 10 million 5- to 14-year-olds, and 52 million children under 5 years of age, will die between 2019 and 2030.
- In 2018, fewer countries showed gender disparities in child mortality, and across the world, boys are expected to have a higher probability of dying before reaching age 5 than girls. But this trend was not reflected in India.

Indian scenario:

- India's under-5 girls face high mortality. India is among the few countries in the world where, in 2018, the mortality for girls under 5 years of age exceeded that of boys.
- According to India's 2017 Sample Registration System, the States with the highest burden of neonatal mortality are Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, with 32, 33 and 30 neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births, respectively. India's neonatal mortality rate is 23.
- Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttarakhand showed the largest gender gaps in under-5 mortality.

INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY**Kaifi Azmi**

Google released a doodle on the occasion of 101 birth anniversary of the Indian Urdu poet Kaifi Azmi.

About:

- Sayyid Athar Hussein Rizvi, known as Kaifi Azmi, (1919 – 2002) was an Indian Urdu poet.
- Kaifi Azmi published his first collection of poems, Jhankar in 1943 and became a member of the influential Progressive Writers' Association that used writing to achieve socioeconomic reforms.
- He is known for bringing Urdu literature into the film industry. His legendary works such as Pakeezah's soundtrack Chalte Chalte and Koi Yeh Kaise Bataye from Arth have gone down as notable contributions in Urdu language and Hindi language.
- Aurat is Azmi's one of the earliest works where he spoke on women empowerment and equality.

Awards and honours:

- He was the recipient of Padma Shri, Sahitya Akademi Award for Urdu for his collection Awaara Sajde, President's Award for national integration and Sahitya Akademi Fellowship for lifetime achievement.
- The government has also inaugurated a train named "Kaifiyat Express" which runs from his hometown Azamgarh to Old Delhi.

Makar Sankranti

The President of India greeted fellow citizens on the eve of the festivals of Lohri, Makar Sankranti, Pongal, Bhogali Bihu, Uttarayan and Paush Parbon. These festivals are celebrated in diverse yet similar ways, across India.

About:

- Makar Sankranti is a festival day in the Hindu calendar, in reference to deity Surya (sun).
- Date of observance: Makar Sankranti is observed according to solar cycles. It is held normally on the 14th of January, or a day before or after. In certain regions celebrations can go on for even four days and vary a lot in the rituals.

Significance: It marks the –

- first day of sun's transit into the Makara (Capricorn), marking the end of the month with the winter solstice and the start of longer days.
- end the inauspicious phase of the preceding month that is called Paush.
- beginning of the end of chilling winter.
- occasion to celebrate the hard work of millions of our farmers and people across the country (it is celebrated as a harvest Festival)
- Names: It goes by its standard all-India name, 'Makar Sankranti' in Odisha, Maharashtra-Goa, Andhra-Telangana, Kerala and most of the north India. It is also called as –
 - Paush Parbon in Bengal,
 - Pongal in Tamil Nadu,
 - Uttarayan in Gujarat,
 - Bhogali Bihu in Assam,
 - Lohri in Punjab and Jammu,
 - Maghi in Haryana and Himachal.
 - Makar Sankramana in Karnataka,
 - Saen-kraat in Kashmir.
 - Sukaraat in Madhya Pradesh,
 - Khichdi Parwa in parts of Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY

Right To Private Property

The Supreme Court held in a judgment that a citizen's right to own private property is a fundamental right. The State cannot take possession of it without following due procedure and authority of law.

Key highlights of the ruling:

- The State cannot trespass into the private property of a citizen and then claim ownership of the land in the name of 'adverse possession.' Grabbing private land and then claiming it as its own makes the State an encroacher.
- In a welfare state, right to property is a human right.

Related Info:

- The court was hearing a plea filed by Vidya Devi, a widow, whose four acres of land was taken over by the Himachal Pradesh government in 1967.
- Ordering the State to pay her ₹ 1 crore in compensation, the Supreme Court noted that in 1967, 'right to private property was still a fundamental right' under Article 31 of the Constitution.
- Property ceased to be a fundamental right with the 44th Constitution Amendment in 1978.
- Nevertheless, Article 300A required the State to follow due procedure and authority of law to deprive a person of his or her private property, the Supreme Court reminded the government.

Social Media Posting A Fundamental Right

The Tripura High Court has ordered that social media posting is a fundamental right.

About:

- In a landmark order, the Tripura High Court has ordered the police to refrain from prosecuting a man who was earlier arrested over a social media post. Chief Justice Akil Kureshi also barred the police from making any further arrests in connection with the case.
- The Chief Justice in his order remarked that posting on social media was tantamount to a "fundamental right" applicable to all citizens, including government employees.
- The Chief Justice passed the order after lawyers moved the court against the arrest of Youth Congress activist Arindam Bhattacharjee over his post on a social media platform. In compliance

with the court's order, the police have now erased Sections 120(B) and 153(A) of the Indian Penal Code from the First Information Report.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

National Strategy For Financial Inclusion (NSFI): 2019-2024

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) for the period 2019-2024.

Key highlights of the strategy:

- Strengthen the ecosystem for various modes of digital financial services in all Tier-II to Tier VI centres to move towards a less-cash society by March 2022.
- Increase outreach of banking outlets to provide banking access to every village within a 5-km radius or a hamlet of 500 households in hilly areas by March 2020.
- Aim was also to see that every adult had access to a financial service provider through a mobile device by March 2024.
- Every willing and eligible adult, who has been enrolled under the Prime Minister Jan Dhan Yojana, to be enrolled under an insurance scheme and a pension scheme by March 2020.
- Make the Public Credit Registry (PCR) fully operational by March 2022 so that authorised financial entities could leverage the same for assessing credit proposals from all citizens.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES

Second Wetland Bird Count (Kaziranga)

Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Assam, has recorded 96 species of wetland birds, as per the second wetland bird count conducted by officials of the park.

Key findings:

- The second wetland bird count revealed a total of 19,225 birds belonging to 96 species of 80 families. The first wetland bird count, conducted in 2018, revealed a total of 10,412 birds covering 80 species under 21 families.
- With 6,181 individuals, the bar-headed goose led the species count, followed by the common teal at 1,557 and northern pintail at 1,359. All three belong to the family anatidae.
- More than half the birds (9,924) and 85 of 96 species were recorded in Agoratoli Range of the park because Sohola, the largest of Kaziranga's 92 perennial wetland, falls in this range.

Related Info:

- There are more than 250 seasonal water bodies in the park, including the River Dipholu.
- At 2,413 rhinos, Kaziranga boasts the world's largest population of one horned rhino.
- Kaziranga has the highest density of Royal Bengal Tigers in the world.
- More than 60% of India's wild buffalo population is found at Kaziranga, along with 7 species of turtles and tortoises, and the only population of Eastern Swamp Deer.

DEFENCE AND SECURITY

ICGS Annie Besant; ICGS Amrit Kaur

Two Indian Coast Guard Ships (ICGS) — Annie Besant and Amrit Kaur — were commissioned by Defence Secretary.

About:

- Indian Coast Guard Ship Annie Besant and Amrit Kaur are second and third in the series of five Fast Patrol Vessels.
- While Annie Besant will be based at Chennai, Amrit Kaur will be based at Haldia.
- The ships are fitted with state-of-the-art technology, and navigation equipment, along with Bofors 40/60 guns and 12.7 mm Stabilised Remote Controlled Guns for enhanced fighting efficiency.
- The ships are built indigenously by the Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) Ltd, Kolkata.

Related Info:

- Annie Besant: ICGS Annie Besant has been named in honour of Ms Annie Besant, a theosophist, women's rights activist and supporter of Indian freedom. She contributed in foundation of Banaras Hindu University (BHU). In 1916, she established the Indian Home Rule League, of which she became President.
- Amrit Kaur: ICGS Amrit Kaur derives her name from Ms Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur who took an active part in Salt Satyagraha and Quit India Movement. She served the Independent India as its first Health Minister. She was the founder member of All India Womens' Conference and founder President of Indian Council for Child Welfare.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

1. With reference to the fundamental rights, consider the following statements:
 1. The Tripura High Court has recently ordered that social media posting is a fundamental right.
 2. The Supreme Court has recently declared that access to the internet is not a fundamental right protected under Article 19 of the Constitution.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. With reference to the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI), consider the following statements:
 1. It aims to strengthen the ecosystem for various modes of digital financial services in all Tier-II to Tier VI centres to move towards a less-cash society by March 2022.
 2. It aims to see that every adult had access to a financial service provider through a mobile device by March 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
3. Which of the following National Park has the highest density of Royal Bengal Tigers in the world?
 - (a) **Kaziranga National Park**
 - (b) Corbett National Park
 - (c) Periyar National Park
 - (d) Rajiv Gandhi National Park
4. With reference to the 'Levels and Trends in Child Mortality' report, consider the following statements:
 1. It was released by the United Nations (UN) inter-agency group for child mortality.
 2. India is among the few countries in the world where, in 2018, the mortality for girls under 5 years of age exceeded that of boys.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 the ICGS Annie Besant and ICGS Amrit Kaur, consider the following statements:
 1. ICGS Annie Besant will be based at Chennai and ICGS Amrit Kaur will be based at Haldia.
 2. The ships are built indigenously by the Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) Ltd, Kolkata.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 'right to private property', consider the following statements:
 1. Property ceased to be a fundamental right with the 42nd Constitution Amendment in 1976.
 2. The Supreme Court has ruled that Article 300A requires the State to follow due procedure and authority of law to deprive a person of his or her private property.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