

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY

Reservation For Economically Weaker Sections

In Sikkim, the State Cabinet decided to allow Economically Weaker Sections of people who do not fall in the reserved category of ST, SC and OBC for 10 per cent Central reservation. The notification regarding the entitlements to the reservation will be issued within a week.

Eligible persons should:

- have an annual family income of less than rupees eight lakhs, or
- who possess less than five acres of land or less than 1,000 square feet residential flat in any municipal area or less than 100 square yards of residential plot in a municipal area or less than 200 square yards of residential plot outside municipal area along the roadside or in commercial areas.

The reservation will not apply to technical and scientific posts and other such posts which are outside the purview of the Central services.

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

Khelo India State Centres Of Excellence (KISCE)

The Sports Ministry is all set to establish Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCE) under the ministry's flagship, Khelo India Scheme to enhance India's Olympic performance.

About:

- One KISCE will be identified in each state and union territory, with an effort to create a robust sporting ecosystem in the entire country.
- In the first leg, the Ministry has identified state-owned sports facilities in eight states of India, including, Karnataka, Odisha, Kerala, Telangana and the north east states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland which will be upgraded into KISCE.
- The State and Union Territory will run the centre and build capacity to turn it into the world-class sporting facility.
- They will be responsible for all aspects of management of the centre including, boarding, lodging and maintenance, while funds for expert coaches, supporting staff, equipments, infrastructure will be extended through the Khelo India Scheme.

Jan Aushadhi Suvidha Sanitary Napkin

Jan Aushadhi Suvidha Sanitary Napkin is being made available in more than 6300 Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushdhi Pariyojna -PMBJP Kendras across the country at a minimum price of Rs.1/-per pad. The market price of the similar Sanitary Napkins is around Rs. 3/- to Rs. 8/- per pad.

About:

- On the eve of World Environment Day 4th June 2018, Government of India proudly announced the launch of "Jan Aushadhi Suvidha Oxo-Biodegradable Sanitary Napkin" for women of India.
- Since inception (4 June 2018) to 10th June, 2020 over 4.61 crore sanitary Napkins have been sold at Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras.
- Sanitary Napkins are environmental friendly, as these pads are made with Oxo-biodegradable material complying with ASTM D-6954 (biodegradability test) standards.
- This step ensured 'Swachhta, Swasthya and Suvidha' for the underprivileged Women of India.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

U.S. Supreme court bars discrimination against LGBT workers

The US Supreme Court ruled that the federal law that prohibits discrimination based on sex should be interpreted to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

About:

- The country's SC decided that gay and transgender people are protected under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The title prohibits employment discrimination based on race, colour, religion, sex and national origin.
- Essentially, with this landmark ruling, the SC has said that Title VII's provision, which says that employers cannot discriminate on the basis of sex, includes LGBTQ employees.
- The ruling involved three cases filed by employees who claimed they were fired from their jobs because of their sexual orientation.
- The landmark ruling represented the biggest moment for LGBT rights in the United States since the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage nationwide in 2015.

Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC)

North Korea blew up the joint liaison office with South Korea in Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC). The demolition follows a recent deterioration in relations between North and South Korea.

About:

- The Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) is located inside North Korea just across the demilitarised zone from South Korea.
- The project was launched in 2004, largely financed by the South to increase co-operation.
- South Korea has said the purpose of the KIC was to develop an industrial park where South Korean companies could manufacture their products using North Korean labour.
- The KIC is a duty-free zone, and there are no restrictions on the use of foreign currency or credit cards. No visa is required to enter the complex.
- It argued that would help North Korea start to reform its economy, which is in a dire state, and ease tensions between the two Koreas. It is one of the last remaining points of peaceful engagement between North and South Korea.

Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)

UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its report said, that India received 51 billion US dollar in foreign investment in 2019.

Key findings of report:

- India was the world's ninth largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) in 2019.
- In the developing Asia region, India was among the top five host economies for FDI.
- FDI to India, the largest South Asian recipient, increased 20 per cent to 51 billion US dollar in 2019.
- Most of the investments were in the information and communication technology and the construction industry.

India in Non-permanent Members of the UNSC

India was elected for the non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Along with India, Ireland, Mexico and Norway also won the Security Council elections held Wednesday.

India's Election:

- India stood unopposed as the nominee for the Asia-Pacific seat, for the 2021-22 term and needs the vote of two-thirds of UNGA members (129 votes) to be confirmed.
- In 2019, the candidature of India was unanimously endorsed by the 55-member Asia-Pacific grouping, which also included China and Pakistan.
- This would be India's eighth term in the UNSC which will begin from January 2021.

Benefits of India's Membership at UNSC:

- India's presence in the UNSC will ensure that the voice of the largest democracy in the world (with strong multilateral credentials) will be heard in an important organ of the United Nations.
- India has always had a global voice and this will give India a greater opportunity to participate actively and shape the Covid-19 and post-Covid scenario.
- Its presence in the UNSC will help bring to the world its ethos of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' -the world is one family.
- The Global South has its development and security aspirations and India will help articulate these aspirations in the Council across different issues.

India's Assistance for Pashupatinath Temple

Recently, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India and Nepal for the construction of a sanitation facility at the Pashupatinath Temple, Kathmandu. This comes amid a raging border row between the two countries.

Key Points

- The facility will be constructed under the Nepal-Bharat Maitri: Development Partnership as a high impact community development scheme by India.
- Financial Assistance: India has pledged to extend financial assistance amounting to Rs. 2.33 crore.
- Implemented by: Kathmandu Metropolitan City.
- Norms and Completion: Norms to be laid out by the Government of Nepal and completion within 15 months.

- Earlier in 2018, Nepal-Bharat Maitri Pashupati Dharmashala was also inaugurated in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Significance: This initiative is another milestone in strengthening cultural ties and people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SEBI Eases Fund-Raising Norms

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has further eased fund-raising norms for firms.

current affairs image

Key highlights:

- SEBI has allowed companies to make two qualified institutional placements (QIPs) with a gap of just two weeks between them. The earlier regulations mandated a minimum gap of six months between two such issuances.
- Promoters can also increase their stakes in their companies through preferential allotments by up to 10% without triggering an open offer. The cap was earlier set at 5%. SEBI has, however, allowed this relaxation only for the current financial year.
- Analysts said the twin moves would help in enhancing liquidity in the market as companies would be able to better time fund-raising while promoters could also acquire shares at a time when valuations were quite low compared with the historic highs.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC

Dexamethasone

Researchers leading a major clinical trial in the UK announced that the drug dexamethasone had been found to cut death rates by around a third in the most severely ill among Covid-19 patients.

About:

- Dexamethasone is a corticosteroid, an easily available medicine that prevents the release of substances in the body that cause inflammation. Its effects are frequently seen within a day, and last for about three days.
- The drug is used when there is any inflammation in the body due to infection or injury.
- The low-cost, anti-inflammatory steroid is well known in the world of sport. Dexamethasone has been used for years by sportspersons to hasten their rehabilitation from injuries and recover from infections.
- The drug is on the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA's) list of prohibited substances. Athletes are, however, barred from using dexamethasone only during competition — meaning, if the substance is detected prior to a competition, it will not be considered a doping offence.
- The “first drug to be shown to improve survival” in the pandemic was hailed by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson as “the biggest breakthrough yet” in the fight against the novel coronavirus.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Q. “The ideas for creating a system of education should be aimed at promoting international co-operation and creating global citizens”. What do you understand by this statement in the present-day scenario? Explain. +

According to Rabindranath Tagore, the highest aim of education is not to give information but make our life in harmony with all existence. The promotion of international cooperation and creation of global citizens requires an education system that promotes the spirit of tolerance, peace, equality and cooperation. Right education is the cornerstone to resolve contemporary global issues like pandemic crisis, economic slowdown, environmental degradation, unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, human rights abuse, gender disparity and even spread of misinformation threatening peace.

Education and Global citizens

- A global citizen has a trans national cooperative attitude and one who cherishes the values of equality, fairness and sustainability. In cultivation of such attitudes, development of the idea of peaceful coexistence in the value system of education is vital for dealing with current global issues.

- Dealing with the contemporary global challenges requires mutual cooperation among citizens, nations and international bodies and organisations. Among these stakeholders the efficacy of citizens holds its key in right education.

Key Challenges

- Dealing with global disasters: In the wake of Covid-19 pandemic, it is necessary that the education system motivates the citizens to adopt a naturally empathetic attitude towards the people and countries severely affected by it.
- Environment Conservation: Education systems which are sensitive to environmental issues inspire countries, cities and regions, businesses and civil society members across the world to take action to accelerate cooperative climate action in support of the environment conservation programs such as the Global Climate Action Agenda.
- Inclusive development under globalisation: Securing socio- economic integration and development of all the people of the world through a free flow of goods, services, information, knowledge and people across all boundaries cannot become a reality without an education system targeting Inclusive development.
- Human rights violations: Intolerance and ignorance is the root cause of conflict and insecurity which, in turn, results in violations of human rights. Education that can instil the spirit of non violence is necessary in bringing sustainable peace especially in terrorism affected areas.
- Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDGs also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.

Indian Scenario

- The values of Indian education system such as dignity, truthfulness, fairness and responsibility complement the directive principle enshrined in Article 51 (promotion of international peace and security) of the Indian Constitution.
- However on the level of behavioural change and transformation of Indian citizens to global citizens, appropriate educational reforms are needed as envisaged under Draft Education policy 2020.
- Assimilating the views of national luminaries like Rabindranath Tagore, who believed the one of the main objectives of education is to make pupils a global citizen and promote universal brotherhood.
 - Agent of Change: The India diaspora has been successful agents of change across the globe in the field of technology (by leading the largest IT companies) , finance, culture (in literature and in various art forms) because universal brotherhood (vasudeva kutumbakam) has been one of the main ethos of Indian education system since ancient times that enables Indian citizens to assimilate themselves in different cultures.

Conclusion

- Thus education holds a major stake in resolving international challenges such as boundary conflict, cyber crimes, food security, distress migration and biodiversity conservation by bringing about attitudinal changes among people and making them global citizens.
- Multicultural education is one solution that could bring rationality by incorporating the histories, texts, values, beliefs, and perspectives of people from different cultural backgrounds.
- There is an urgent need for prospective reforms such as eliminating illiteracy universally, increasing gender sensitivity, and rationalization of the education system.