

GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.**Report on Literacy Rate**

Recently, the report on 'Household Social Consumption: Education in India as part of 75th round of National Sample Survey - from July 2017 to June 2018' has been released.

- It is based on the National Statistical Office (NSO) survey and provides for state-wise detail of literacy rate among the persons aged seven years and above.
- The report comes before the International Literacy Day which is celebrated on 8th September every year.

Key Points

- Data Analysis: India's Overall Literacy Rate is 77.7%.
 - Urban Areas: 87.7%.
 - Rural areas: 73.5%.
 - Male Literacy Rate: 84.7%.
 - Female Literacy Rate: 70.3%.
 - The male literacy rate is higher than the female literacy rate among all states with a considerable gap in the worst-performing states.
 - Best Performers: Kerala > Delhi > Uttarakhand > Himachal Pradesh > Assam.
 - Worst Performers: Andhra Pradesh < Rajasthan < Bihar < Telangana < Uttar Pradesh.
 - Digital Literacy:
 - 23% of urban households and 4% of rural households possess computers.
 - Among persons of age 15-29 years, nearly 56% in urban areas and 24% in rural areas were able to operate a computer.
 - In the same age group, nearly 25% in rural areas and 58% in urban areas reported the use of the internet.

International Literacy Day 2020

- The importance of literacy was first observed at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) General conference in 1966 and following this, the first International Literacy Day was celebrated on 8th September 1967 and the tradition has been held annually since then.
- Objective: To raise awareness and remind people of the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights.
- Literacy Day 2020: It will focus on the changes and challenges in learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - It will reflect on the innovative and effective pedagogies that can be used in youth and adult literacy programmes to face the pandemic and beyond.
- The international community is focusing on 2030 with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and has aimed to "ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning" within its goals of SDG 4.
- The 50-year review of South Asia (which includes Bangladesh, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal and Pakistan) states that the large scale illiteracy is ever-present among adults.
 - As per UNESCO, India will achieve universal literacy by 2060.

Government Initiatives**For Education and Literacy:**

- National Education Policy, 2020: It aims at making "India a global knowledge superpower" by introducing several changes from the school to college level in the Indian education system.
- Samagra Shiksha: It is an integrated scheme for school education extending from pre-school to class XII to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels of school education.
- Mid Day Meal Scheme: It provides that every child within the age group of six to fourteen years studying in classes I to VIII who enrolls and attends the school, shall be provided hot cooked nutritional meals, free of charge every day except on school holidays.
- Eklavya Model School and Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme (RGNF): These aim to encourage the students belonging to Scheduled Tribes (ST) community to pursue higher education.

For Digital Literacy:

- Digital India Programme: It pulls together many existing schemes by restructuring and re-focusing them and then implementing them in a synchronized manner.
- Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan: It is one of the largest initiatives of the country with the target of making citizens digitally literate.
- National Digital Literacy Mission: It aims to empower at least one person per household with crucial digital literacy skills by 2020.
- Bharat Net Programme: It aims to have an optical fibre network in all gram panchayats.

Way Forward

- There is a need for real emancipation of the people. Education systems across the world should provide the training required for children and working adults so that they can learn to read and write. National educational plans should include schooling for children and literacy training for adults as parallel elements.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Kiran : Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched a 24/7 toll-free helpline ‘Kiran’ to provide support to people facing anxiety, stress, depression, suicidal thoughts and other mental health concerns.

- Earlier, the Ministry of Education had launched the ‘Manodarpan’ initiative to provide psycho-social support and counselling to students for their mental health and well-being.

Key Points

▪ **About the Helpline:**

- It will cater to - People in Distress, pandemic induced psychological issues and Mental Health Emergency.
- It will offer mental health rehabilitation services with the objective of early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, promoting positive behaviours, etc.
- It will be available in 13 languages and has 660 clinical/rehabilitation psychologists and 668 psychiatrists as volunteers.
- It is being coordinated by the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD), Chennai (Tamil Nadu) and National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR), Sehore (Madhya Pradesh).
 - NIEPMD and NIMHR are under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Helpline operators had been sensitised not to ask the caller for name or any identification details.

▪ **Need:**

- Uncertainties due to Covid-19 pandemic: From the personal risk to be infected to what economic prospects might look like.
- Mental Illness:
 - There was a shortage of qualified mental health professionals while 10.6% of adults and 7.3% of adolescents faced mental illness, according to a NIMHANS survey in 2015-2016. Greater prevalence is amongst persons living in Urban Metros.
 - Treatment Gap ranges from 70% to 92%.
 - The treatment gap is the number of people with an illness, disease, or disorder who need treatment but do not get it (expressed as a percentage). It can be used as an outcome measure in health care.
 - Suicide was the leading cause of death in India in 2016 for those aged 15–39 years; 71.2% of the suicide deaths among women and 57.7% among men were in this age group.
 - As per the World Health Organisation (WHO), mental health workforces in India (per 1,00,000 population) include psychiatrists (0.3), nurses (0.12), psychologists (0.07) and social workers (0.07).
 - As per WHO global health report 2019, out of every four persons, one person will have some mental problem at a given point of time in their lives. Mental illness is among the leading causes of disability and ill- health in the world.

- Steps Taken by the Government:

- National Mental Health Program (NMHP):
 - To address the huge burden of mental disorders and shortage of qualified professionals in the field of mental health, the government has been implementing the National Mental Health Program (NMHP) since 1982.
 - The Program was re-strategized in 2003 to include two schemes, viz. Modernization of State Mental Hospitals and Up-gradation of Psychiatric Wings of Medical Colleges/General Hospitals.
- Mental HealthCare Act 2017:
 - It guarantees every affected person access to mental healthcare and treatment from services run or funded by the government.
 - It has significantly reduced the scope for the use of Section 309 IPC and made the attempt to commit suicide punishable only as an exception.
 - Section 115(1) of the MHCA states: “Notwithstanding anything contained in section 309 of the Indian Penal Code any person who attempts to commit suicide shall be presumed, unless proved otherwise, to have severe stress and shall not be tried and punished under the said Code.”

Way Forward

- Mental health needs to be a priority, from immediate crisis intervention and helplines to focusing on preventive mental health and reducing stigma around help seeking. It's time the government advocates for mental health outcomes, strives for early identification and treatment, and uses the digital transformation (National Digital Health Mission) to provide mental health care to all.
- The need of the hour is to provoke masses to learn about mental health through campaigns like Swachh Mansikta Abhiyan.
- Further, spending on mental health care needs to be increased. India has spent only 0.05% of its health budget annually on mental health over the last few years, much lower than even the average spending of low-income countries, which comes to about 0.5% of their healthcare budgets.

INDIAN ECONOMY

High Forex Reserves

As per the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data, India's foreign exchange (forex) reserves touched a record high of USD 541.431 billion in the week ended 28th August 2020.

Key Points

- **Forex Reserves:**
 - Definition: Foreign exchange reserves are assets denominated in a foreign currency that are held on reserve by a central bank. These may include foreign currencies, bonds, treasury bills and other government securities.
 - Objectives Behind Holding Forex Reserves:
 - Supporting and maintaining confidence in the policies for monetary and exchange rate management
 - Provides the capacity to intervene in support of the national or union currency.
 - Limits external vulnerability by maintaining foreign currency liquidity to absorb shocks during times of crisis or when access to borrowing is curtailed.
 - Forex Reserves in India: Forex reserves are external assets accumulated by India and controlled by the RBI in the form of:
 - Gold
 - SDRs (special drawing rights of the International Monetary Fund - IMF)
 - Foreign currency assets (capital inflows to the capital markets, Foreign Direct Investment and external commercial borrowings)
 - Reserve Position with IMF
 - Forex Reserves Storage: The RBI Act, 1934 provides the legal framework for deployment of reserves in different foreign currency assets and gold within the broad parameters of currencies, instruments, and issuers.
- **Reasons for High Forex Reserves:**
 - Rise in investment by foreign portfolio investors and increased foreign direct investments (FDIs).

- The sharp jump in reserves started with the Finance Ministry's announcement in 2019, cutting corporate tax rates.
- Fall in crude oil prices has brought down the oil import bill, saving precious foreign exchange.
- Dollar outflow from overseas remittances and foreign travels have fallen steeply.
- **Significance of rising forex reserves:**
 - Comfortable Position for the Government: The rising forex reserves give comfort to the government and the RBI in managing India's external and internal financial issues at a time of major contraction (23.9%) in economic growth.
 - Managing Crisis: It serves as a cushion in the event of a Balance of Payment (BoP) crisis on the economic front.
 - It is enough to cover the import bill of the country for a year.
 - Assist the government in meeting its foreign exchange needs and external debt obligations.
 - Rupee Appreciation: The rising reserves have also helped the rupee to strengthen against the dollar.
 - Confidence in Market: Reserves will provide a level of confidence to markets and investors that a country can meet its external obligations

Using Forex for Infrastructure

- Arguments in Favour: There was a demand from some quarters that forex reserves should be used for infrastructure and other development needs in the country because of:
 - Adequate Forex Reserves: Sufficiency of forex reserves is sometimes measured on how many months' worth of imports can a country afford. Six months is the safer limit and at present reserve is sufficient for the whole year.
 - Adequate Contingency Arrangement: In case of a credit shock, India can mitigate any balance of payment crisis situation, as there are sufficient arrangements for foreign exchange reserves in the form of a credit line from the IMF and many central bank liquidity swap agreements with countries like Japan.
 - Leveraging Forex as a Last Resort: Tax revenues, in this fiscal year, will be affected by lower-than-expected economic activity. Also, non-tax revenue will remain subdued as the RBI has already given a huge dividend payment to the government in 2019.
 - Thus, the lack of considerable space both on the monetary and fiscal front to support economic growth, part of the country's forex reserves can be used for stimulating the economy.
- Arguments Against: The RBI had opposed the plan. Reasons may include the considerations of:
 - Oil Price unpredictability: Current low crude oil prices are due to several issues, one such is the price war between Russia and Saudi Arabia. As soon as a common ground is agreed between the two, the crude prices will tend to rise again.
 - Unreliable Portfolio Investments: Another issue is the high ratio of volatile flows (portfolio flows and short-term debt) to reserves which is around 80%. This money can exit at a fast pace. FIIs by their nature are investments based on speculation.
 - Therefore, the current surge in forex reserves should not be treated of permanent nature.
 - In March 2020 alone, foreign institutional investments in India fell by Rs. 65,000 crore.
 - Confidence of High Forex: High forex reserves also help India to maintain its global rating, especially in the context of falling GDP growth rate.
 - The depletion in forex reserves may have a negative impact on these ratings, which in turn may reduce foreign investment inflows into India.
 - Volatility in Indian Rupee: RBI has been fundamentally using India's foreign exchange to ensure rupee stability.

Way Forward

If the government intends to use forex reserves as an emergency fund, it should ensure that they do not shrink just when they are most needed. Apart from it, there is a need for separate attention to carry out structural reforms that can really pull out the Indian economy from persistent slowdown.

BIODIVERSITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Review of National Forest Policy 1988

Recently the Director General of Forests has advocated for the amendment of National Forest Policy, 1988.

- The recommendations are based on a research paper published in 2016 in the *Natural Resources Forum*, a United Nations Sustainable Development Journal which called for sustainable forest management based on certification and a policy characterised by restoration, conservation and production equally.

Key Points

- Data unavailability: There is a lack of reliable data relating to growing stock, consumption and production of timber, which constrained forecast of supply and demand projections.
- Focus on TOFs:
 - The potential of timber production from Trees Outside Forests (TOFs) i.e. grown outside government Recorded Forest Areas (RFAs) must be explored and tapped.
 - Recorded Forest Area (RFA) refers to all the geographic areas recorded as forest in government records. Recorded forest areas comprises Reserved Forests (RF) and Protected Forests (PF), which have been constituted under the provisions of Indian Forest Act, 1927.
 - According to India State of Forest Report (2011), timber production from government forests is 3.17 million m³ and potential timber production from TOFs is 42.77 million m³. India State of Forest Report (ISFR) is a biennial publication of Forest Survey of India (FSI), an organization under the Ministry of Environment Forest & Climate Change.
 - The Supreme Court ruling in the Godavarman Case, 1996 stopping felling of trees in forest areas led to decrease in domestic production of timber.
 - Production forestry should focus on sustainable increase in forest productivity from TOFs and RFAs.
 - To boost production through RFA States must devise working plans and demarcate 10% of the forests for plantations.
 - For TOFs, a synchronised nationwide policy could be developed.
 - Increasing wood production will also push carbon sequestration, and help in mitigating effects of climate change.
 - Increasing timber production from TOFs can revive the rural economy.
- Review of Import-Export Policy: Since the domestic timber production has declined and imports have increased manifolds, there is a need to review Export-Import Policy.
 - The domestic demand of timber has grown owing to increasing population and per capita GDP. Dependency on imports is not viable as exporters worldwide are shifting to a conservation-based approach.
 - The Export Import Policy should be reviewed to rectify the pricing in the market so that it is economically viable to grow trees on farmlands,
 - Export Import Policy or better known as Exim Policy is a set of guidelines and instructions related to the import and export of goods. The Government of India notifies the Exim Policy for a period of five years under the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation Act), 1992.
- Revision of Indian Forest Policy: The paper emphasized on revising the Indian Forest Policy to boost domestic production.
 - The conservation policies must focus on maintaining ecological balance and improving biodiversity through protected area management.
 - The restoration policies must target reclamation, rehabilitation and regeneration of degraded landscapes and wastelands.

Background

- India's forests are currently governed by the National Forest Policy, 1988
- It has environmental balance and livelihood at its centre.
- Salient Features and Goals:
 - Maintenance of environmental stability through preservation and restoration of ecological balance.
 - Conservation of Natural Heritage (existing).
 - Checking Soil Erosion and Denudation in catchment areas of rivers, lakes, and reservoirs.

- Checking extension of sand dunes in desert areas of Rajasthan and along coastal tracts.
- Substantially increasing Forest/Tree Cover through Afforestation and Social Forestry.
- Taking steps to meet requirements of fuel, wood, fodder, minor forest produces, soil and timber of Rural and Tribal Population.
- Increasing the productivity of Forests to meet National Needs.
- Encouraging efficient utilization of Forest Produce and Optimum Use of Wood (Timber).
- Generation of Work Opportunities, the involvement of Women.
- Criticism: It has not been updated in a long time while the situation of forests and climate has substantially changed.
 - Key policies regarding forests and forest management are either missing, delayed or left open-ended. For example, at present, there is no clear definition of forest that is accepted nationally and states are left to determine their definition of forests.
- A draft National Forest Policy was released in 2019. The basic thrust of the draft is conservation, protection and management of forests along with safeguarding the interest of tribals and forest-dependent people.
- Other Legislations that Govern Indian Forests:
 - Indian Forest Act 1927
 - Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act 2016
 - Forest Conservation Act 1980
 - Forest Rights Act 2006
 - Wildlife Protection Act 1972

Additional Information

Forestry in India

- According to India State of Forest Report, 2019, tree and forest cover together made up 24.56% (8,07,276 sq km) of India's area
- In landmark 1996 Godavarman Case, the Supreme Court defined forests as all areas that are forests in the dictionary meaning of the term irrespective of the nature of ownership and classification thereof.
 - The court also ordered all non-forest activity like sawmills and mining to be suspended in forest areas and stopped felling of trees in this order.
- Constitutional Provisions:
 - Forests and Protection of Wild Animals and Birds are included in the Concurrent List in the (Seventh Schedule) of the Constitution of India.
 - Through the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976 Forests and Protection of Wild Animals and Birds were transferred from State to Concurrent List along with Education, Weights & Measures and Administration of Justice.
 - Article 51 A (g) of the Constitution states that it shall be the fundamental duty of every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment including forests and Wildlife.
 - Article 48 A in the Directive Principles of State policy, mandates that the State shall endeavor to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.

International Day of Clean Air

Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has organised a webinar on the occasion of the first-ever International Day of Clean Air For Blue Skies.

- In December 2019, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution to observe this day on 7th September every year, starting from 2020.
- The Day aims to demonstrate the close link of air quality to other environmental/developmental challenges and raise public awareness related to air quality at all levels.

Key Points

- **Indian Government's Efforts:**
 - It is committed to reducing the air pollution level in 122 most polluted cities.
 - In 2014, the Air Quality Index (AQI) was launched which currently tracks the levels of pollution on eight parameters.
 - These parameters are ground-level ozone, Particulate Matter (PM) 10, PM 2.5, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ammonia and lead.

- Ground-level ozone and airborne particles are the two pollutants that pose the greatest threat to human health in India.
- The Prime Minister in his Independence day speech also highlighted the issue of air pollution and put across the goal of holistic improvement in air quality in 100 cities by drawing up micro-plans to target hotspots.
- A brochure on Integrated Measures to Combat Air Pollution under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) has been launched in the webinar.
 - In January 2019, NCAP was launched to tackle the problem of air pollution in a comprehensive manner with a target to achieve 20 to 30% reduction in PM 10 and PM 2.5 concentrations by 2024 keeping 2017 as the base year.
- India has migrated to BS-VI standards, quality petrol and diesel, which is an important initiative to fight against pollution.
 - The Bharat Stage (BS) are emission standards instituted by the Government of India to regulate the output of air pollutants from motor vehicles.
 - The Environment Ministry is responsible for deciding the fuel standard in the country. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) implements these standards.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:**
 - States must work with city-specific plans, as every city has a different source of pollution.
 - A city is not equally polluted in all areas so the most effective way to reduce air pollution in cities is to identify the hotspots and then disburse funds for solutions in these identified areas.
 - Use of electric vehicles must be encouraged and the public transport should be modernised.
 - Augmenting waste management infrastructure, paving roads to make them dust free and imposing stringent norms on industry and ensuring that they switch to cleaner fuels.
 - People's participation is a must to clean the air. Car-pooling and use of public transport must be promoted.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize

Sir David Attenborough has been conferred with Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for 2019 at a virtual ceremony.

Key Points

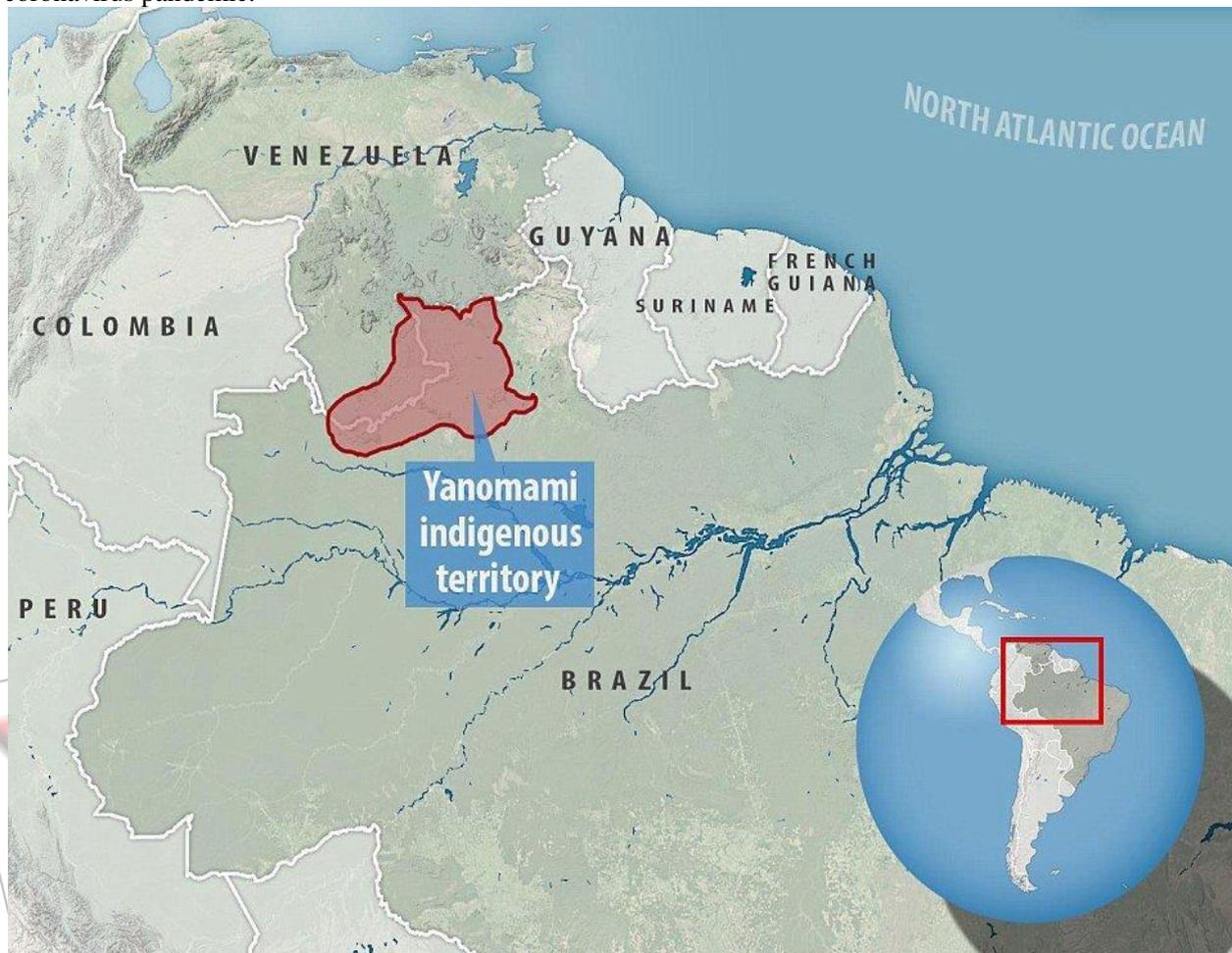
Indira Gandhi Peace Prize

- The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development is an annual prestigious award named after former prime minister Indira Gandhi.
- It is conferred every year by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust since 1986.
- It consists of a citation and a monetary award of Rs. 25 lakh.
- The award recognizes creative efforts by individuals/organizations working towards:
 - Creating new international economic order,
 - Promoting international peace & development,
 - Ensuring that scientific discoveries are used for the larger good of humanity and enlarging the scope of freedom.
- David Attenborough
 - Sir David is an English broadcaster and natural historian.
 - He is best known for writing and presenting the BBC Natural History Unit.
 - The nine natural history documentary series forming the Life collection that together constitute a comprehensive survey of animal and plant life on Earth.
 - He has worked to make aware about the need to- preserve and protect biodiversity of the planet, to live in a sustainable and harmonious way with all life.
- Notable Recipients of Indira Gandhi Peace Prize:
 - Parliamentarians for Global Action (1986)
 - UNICEF (1989)
 - M S Swaminathan (1999)
 - Kofi Annan (2003)

- Indian Space Research Organization_(ISRO) (2014)
- UN High Commission for Refugees_(UNHRC) (2015)
- Centre for Science and Environment (2018)

Yanomami Tribe of South Africa

The Yanomami tribe has launched a global campaign to expel 20,000 gold miners from their land amid the coronavirus pandemic.



Key Points

- The Yanomami live in the rainforests and mountains of northern Brazil and southern Venezuela, and are, according to Survival International, the largest relatively isolated tribe in South America.
 - Guarani, Kaingang, Pataxó, Hã Hã Hãe, Tupinambá, Yanomami, Tikuna and Akuntsu are popular tribes of the Amazon basin. Amazon is a river of South America and its basin is the largest tropical rainforest in the world.
 - Survival International is an international human rights advocacy based in London (UK), which campaigns for the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples around the world.
- The tribe numbers around 38,000 today, and its members live in contiguous forested territory of around 9.6 million hectares in Brazil and 8.2 million hectares in Venezuela.
- They live in large, circular houses called yanos or shabonos, some of which can hold up to 400 people.
- The Yanomami consider all people to be equal, and do not have a chief. Instead, all decisions are based on consensus after long discussions and debates.
- They are speakers of a Xirianá language.
- A Brazilian indigenous leader Davi Kopenawa who secured the land rights of the Yanomami people was awarded the Right Livelihood Award-2019, also known as Sweden's alternative Nobel Prize.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. Discuss howfar Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) has been useful for our environment as well as society?. (250 words)

Ans.

- UN Environment Programme (UNEP) defines Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as a tool used to identify the environmental, social and economic impacts of a project prior to decision-making.
 - It aims to predict environmental impacts at an early stage in project planning and design, find ways and means to reduce adverse impacts, shape projects to suit the local environment and present the predictions and options to decision-makers.
- Environment Impact Assessment in India is statutorily backed by the Environment Protection Act, 1986 which contains various provisions on EIA methodology and process.

Importance of EIA for environment as well as society

- EIA links the environment with development for environmentally safe and sustainable development.
- EIA provides a cost effective method to eliminate or minimize the adverse impact of developmental projects.
- EIA enables the decision makers to analyse the effect of developmental activities on the environment well before the developmental project is implemented.
- EIA encourages the adaptation of mitigation strategies in the developmental plan.
- EIA makes sure that the developmental plan is environmentally sound and within the limits of the capacity of assimilation and regeneration of the ecosystem.

Shortcomings of EIA

- **Applicability:** There are several projects with significant environmental impacts that are exempted from the notification either because they are not listed in schedule I, or their investments are less than what is provided for in the notification.
- **Lack of experts:** It has been found that the team formed for conducting EIA studies is lacking the expertise in various fields such as environmentalists, wildlife experts, Anthropologists and Social Scientists.
- **Public hearing:** Public comments are not considered at an early stage, which often leads to conflict at a later stage of project clearance.
 - A number of projects with significant environmental and social impacts have been excluded from the mandatory public hearing process.
 - The data collectors do not pay respect to the indigenous knowledge of local people.
- **Quality of EIA:** One of the biggest concerns with the environmental clearance process is related to the quality of EIA reports that are being carried out.
- **Lack of Credibility:** There are so many cases of fraudulent EIA studies where erroneous data has been used, same facts used for two totally different places etc.
 - Often, and more so for strategic industries such as nuclear energy projects, the EMPs are kept confidential for political and administrative reasons.
- Details regarding the effectiveness and implementation of mitigation measures are often not provided.
- Emergency preparedness plans are not discussed in sufficient details and the information not disseminated to the communities.

Way forward

- **Applicability:** All those projects where there is likely to be a significant alteration of ecosystems need to go through the process of environmental clearance, without exception.
 - No industrial developmental activity should be permitted in ecologically sensitive areas.
- **Public hearing:** Public hearings should be applicable to all hitherto exempt categories of projects which have environmental impacts.
- The focus of EIA needs to shift from utilization and exploitation of natural resources to conservation of natural resources.
- It is critical that the preparation of an EIA is completely independent of the project proponent.
- **Grant of clearance:** The notification needs to make it clear that the provision for site clearance does not imply any commitment on the part of the impact Assessment agency to grant full environmental clearance.
- **Composition of expert committees:** The present executive committees should be included with expert people from various stakeholder groups, who are reputed in environmental and other relevant fields.
- Citizens should be able to access the authority for redressal of all violations of the EIA notification as well as issues relating to non-compliance.

- Capacity building: NGOs, civil society groups and local communities need to build their capacities to use the EIA notification towards better decision making on projects.

Conclusion

- Recently, the government has drafted new rules for EIA, 2020, the most controversial rule being reducing the time for public scrutiny.
- EIA is essentially a useful component of sound environment management and the government must understand that reducing the time for public scrutiny is essentially diluting the EIA process.

DAILY QUIZ

1. Recently the Yanomami Tribe has been in the news. It belongs to which of the following geographical regions?

- a. Amazon forests b. Naga hills
c. Papua New Guinea d. Falkland Islands

2. With reference to the 'KIRAN Helpline', consider the following statements:

1. It aims to provide support to people for their mental health and well-being.
2. It is launched by the Ministry of Education.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only b. 2 only
c. both 1&2 d. Neither 1 nor 2

3. With reference to India State of Forest Report (2019), consider the following statements:

1. Arunachal Pradesh has the highest forest cover Area-wise.
2. Karnataka has shown the highest increase in forest cover.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only b. 2 only
c. Both 1& 2 d. None

4. With reference to Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development, which of the following is/are correct?

1. It is the award accorded biennially by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.
2. The prize is awarded to Indian citizens only.

Choose the correct answer from the codes given below.

- a. 1 only b. 2 only
c. Both 1& 2 d. Neither 1 nor 2

5. With reference to Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV), consider the following statements:

1. It is an unmanned ramjet demonstration aircraft that can travel at hypersonic speed.
2. India is the only country that has developed this technology.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only b. 2 only
c. 1&2 only d. Neither 1 nor 2