

GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.**Jan Shikshan Sansthan**

Recently, the Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) has brought high-speed internet to some of the remotest tribal hamlets deep inside the Nilambur jungle in Kerala.

Key Points

- The Scheme of JSS formerly known as Shramik Vidyapeeth was a unique creation of the Government of India and has been implemented through Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the country since 1967.
- The scheme was renamed as JSS in 2000.
- It was transferred from the Ministry of Education (erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development) to the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in July, 2018.
- The JSSs are imparting vocational skill training programmes at the door step of the beneficiaries with a minimum cost and infrastructure.
- JSSs are unique in the sense that they do not provide only vocational skills but also include an element of life skills which can help the beneficiary in day to day life.
- They are not working in isolation but also conduct convergence programmes with different departments.
- At present, 233 JSSs in 25 States and 3 Union Territories are functional.
- The annual coverage of the beneficiaries is around 4 lakh, out of which 85% are women.

Mandate:

- To provide vocational skills in non-formal mode to non-literate, neo-literates, persons with rudimentary level of education upto 8th and school drop-outs upto 12th standard in the age group of 15-45 years.
- The priority groups are women, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, minorities and other backward sections of the society.

Implementation:

- It is implemented through NGOs with 100% grants from the Government of India. JSSs are registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- The affairs of Jan Shikshan Sansthan are managed by the respective Board of Management approved by the Government of India.

Scope of Work of JSS:

- Develop/Source appropriate curriculum and training modules covering vocational elements, general awareness and life enrichment components.
- JSSs are encouraged to undertake training equivalent to courses designed by the Directorate of Adult Education, National Institute of Open Schooling and Director General, Employment & Training.
- Provide training to a pool of resource persons and master trainers for conducting training.
- Administer simple tests and award certificates.
- Network with employers and industries for trainees to get suitable placement.

INTERNATIONAL RELATION**Exercise Konkan 2021**

- Indo-UK Naval Exercise, 'Konkan 2021' was recently held between INS Tabar and HMS Westminster in the English Channel.
- The English Channel is located between the Isle of Great Britain's southern coast and France's northern coast and separated from the North Sea on the north by the Strait of Dover.



Key Points

- The Bilateral Konkan exercise is a naval exercise conducted between India and the United Kingdom.
- The Konkan series of exercises was started in 2004. Since then, the exercise is hosted in rotation by both the Navies and has grown in complexity, scale, and intensity.

Other Exercises between India and UK:

- Exercise 'Indradhanush' (Air Force Exercise)
- Ajeya Warrior (Joint Military Exercise)

INS Tabar:

- It is the third Talwar-class frigate in the Indian Navy, which was commissioned in 2004 in Kaliningrad, Russia.
- This warship can handle air or surface or subsurface missions and defend herself.
- The Talwar class of frigates of the Indian Navy have been built in Russia under an Indo-Russian joint production. The Talwar class guided missile frigates are modified Krivak III class frigates from Russia. Other Frigates are: INS Teg, Tarkash, Trikand, Talwar, Trishul.
- In October 2016, India and Russia signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) for four Krivak or Talwar stealth frigates.
- The first two frigates will be built in Yantar Shipyard, in Kaliningrad, Russia. The following two will be built in Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL).

INDIAN GEOGRAPHY**Geo-Tourism in Northeast**

Recently, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) has identified certain geological sites across the Northeast for promotion of geo-tourism.

12 locations in the Northeast have been included in the 32 approved geo-tourism or geo-heritage sites in the country.

Key Points**Geo-heritage Sites:**

- Geo-heritage refers to the geological features which are inherently or culturally significant offering insight to earth's evolution or history to earth science or that can be utilized for education.
- Geological Survey of India (GSI) is the parent body which is making efforts towards identification and protection of geo-heritage sites/national geological monuments in the country.
- Some of these sites are: Marine Gondwana fossil park in Chhattisgarh; Siwalik vertebrate fossil park in Himachal Pradesh; Stromatolite park in Rajasthan; Pillow lava in Karnataka, Eoparchaeon unconformity and Tirumala hills in Andhra Pradesh, Lonar Lake in Maharashtra, etc.

Geo Tourism:

- Geotourism is defined as "tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place - its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents."
- It will foster community involvement, improve the local economy and create respect for local culture and tradition.
- India is a country with diverse physical attributes, rich cultural heritage and eventful ancient history and its subcontinent exhibits imprints of varied geological processes through ages and is a storehouse of interesting geological features.

Geo-heritage sites in Northeast:**Majuli (Assam):**

- A river "island", among the world's largest, in Brahmaputra river.
- The island is also the hub of spiritualism in Assam because of a number of 'satras' or Vaishnav monasteries established by the 15th-16th century saint-reformer Srimanta Sankaradeva and his disciples.

Sangetsar Tso (Arunachal Pradesh):

- It is popularly known as Madhuri Lake.
- It is close to the border with Tibet and was formed due to the damming of a river during a major earthquake in 1950.

Loktak Lake (Manipur):

- It is the largest freshwater lake in the Northeast.

- The attractions of this lake are the 'phumdis' or floating biomass and the 'phumsangs' or huts of fishermen on them.
- The Keibul Lamjao National Park, the only floating wildlife habitat on earth, is on the southwestern part of the lake and is the last natural habitat of the sangai or brow-antlered dancing deer.

Others:

Mawmluh Cave, Mawblei or God's Rock, Therriaghat (Meghalaya); Umananda (Assam), Chabimura, Unakoti (Tripura); Sangetsar Tso (Arunachal Pradesh); Reiek Tlang (Mizoram); Naga Hill Ophiolite (Nagaland); Stromatolite Park (Sikkim).

INDIAN ECONOMY**Ubharte Sitaare Alternative Investment Fund**

Recently, the Ministry of Finance has launched 'Ubharte Sitaare' Alternative Investment Fund to facilitate debt and equity funding to export-oriented MSMEs (Micro Small and medium Enterprises).

The fund is expected to identify Indian enterprises with potential advantages, but which are currently underperforming or unable to tap their latent potential to grow.

Alternative Investment Fund

- Anything alternative to traditional forms of investments gets categorized as alternative investments.
- In India, AIFs are defined in Regulation 2(1)(b) of Securities and Exchange Board of India (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012.
- It refers to any privately pooled investment fund, (whether from Indian or foreign sources), in the form of a trust or a company or a body corporate or a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), which are not presently covered by any Regulation of SEBI governing fund management nor coming under the direct regulation of any other sectoral regulators in India.
- Thus, the definition of AIFs includes venture Capital Fund, hedge funds, private equity funds, commodity funds, Debt Funds, infrastructure funds, etc.

Key Points

- Under the scheme, an identified company is supported even if it is currently underperforming or may be unable to tap its latent potential to grow.
- The scheme diagnoses such challenges and provides support through a mix of structured support covering equity, debt and technical assistance. It will also have a Greenshoe Option of Rs 250 crore.
- A greenshoe option is an over-allotment option, which is a term that is commonly used to describe a special arrangement in a share offering for example an IPO (Initial Public Offering) that will enable the investment bank to support the share price after the offering without putting their own capital at risk.
- The fund has been set up jointly by Exim Bank and SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) which will invest in the fund by way of equity and equity-like products in export-oriented units, in both manufacturing and services sectors.

Objectives:

- To enhance India's competitiveness in select sectors through finance and extensive handholding support.
- Identify and nurture companies having differentiated technology, products or processes, and enhance their export business; assist units with export potential, which are unable to scale up their operations for want of finance.
- Identify and mitigate challenges faced by successful companies which hinder their exports.
- Assist existing exporters in widening their basket of products and target new markets through a strategic and structured export market development initiative.

BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM**Rise in Heat Waves**

According to a recent study, more than 3,56,000 people died in 2019 as a result of extreme heat and that number is likely to grow in the future.

Recent heat waves across the world have been alarming in terms of global warming and have been attributed to climate change.

Key Points**Heat Waves:**

- Heat wave is a condition of air temperature which becomes fatal to the human body when exposed.
- In India, heat waves typically occur between March and June, and in some rare cases even extend till July.
- A heat wave is a period of abnormally high temperatures, more than the normal maximum temperature that occurs during the summer season in the North-Western and South Central parts of India.
- The India Meteorological Department requires that temperatures should reach at least 40°C in the plains and at least 30°C in the hilly regions, and should reflect an increase of at least 5°C-6°C above the normal temperature to be classified as a heatwave.

Impact of Heat Waves:

Heat Strokes: The very high temperatures or humid conditions pose an elevated risk of heat stroke or heat exhaustion.

Older people and people with chronic illness such as heart disease, respiratory disease, and diabetes are more susceptible to heatstroke, as the body's ability to regulate heat deteriorates with age.

Increased Healthcare Costs: Effects from extreme heat are also associated with increased hospitalisations and emergency room visits, increased deaths from cardio-respiratory and other diseases, mental health issues, adverse pregnancy and birth outcomes, etc.

Lessens Workers' Productivity: Extreme heat also lessens worker productivity, especially among the more than 1 billion workers who are exposed to high heat on a regular basis. These workers often report reduced work output due to heat stress.

Risk of Wildfires: The heat domes act as fuel to wildfires, which destroys a lot of land area every year in countries like the US.

Prevents Cloud Formation: The condition also prevents clouds from forming, allowing for more radiation from the sun to hit the ground.

Effect on Vegetation: The trapping of heat can also damage crops, dry out vegetation and result in droughts.

Increased Energy Demands: The sweltering heat wave also leads to rise in energy demand, especially electricity, leading to pushing up rates.

Power Related Issues: Heat waves are often high mortality disasters.

Avoiding heat-related disasters depends on the resilience of the electrical grid, which can fail if electricity demand due to air conditioning use exceeds supply.

As a result, there is the **double risk of infrastructure failure and health impacts.**

Recommendations:**Cooling Measures:**

Effective and environmentally sustainable cooling measures can protect from the worst health impacts of heat.

These range from increasing green space in cities, wall coatings that reflect heat from buildings, and widespread use of electric fans and other widely available personal cooling techniques.

Climate Change Mitigation:

Climate change mitigation to reduce carbon emissions and alter the further warming of the planet can also help.

Effective Prevention Measures:

Identifying timely and effective prevention and response measures, particularly for low-resource settings can help in mitigating the problem.

Initiatives Taken:**Global:**

- Global forums dealing with climate change issues—such as the World Health Organization, World Economic Forum, First Global Forum on Heat and Health, and the Global Forum for Environment-OECD—also focus on heat waves by investing in research on health risks of extreme heat, climate and weather information, advice on surviving heat waves, partnerships and capacity building, and communications and outreach.

Indian:

- The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued guidelines on dealing with heatwaves.
- However, India does not recognise heatwaves as a disaster under its Disaster Management Act (2005).

Way Forward

In alignment with the Paris Agreement, the study calls for global warming to be limited to 1.5°C to avoid substantial heat-related mortality in the future. Reducing the health impacts of extreme heat is an urgent priority and should include immediate changes to infrastructure, urban environment, and individual behaviour to prevent heat-related deaths.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM**Hindustan-228 Civil Aircraft**

- Recently, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) carried out a successful ground run and low speed taxi trials of a commercial aircraft “Hindustan-228” (Do-228).
- HAL is building civil aircrafts to promote the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) Scheme. The central government aims to set up 1,000 new air routes and establish 100 new airports, under the UDAN scheme.
- HAL is a public sector aircraft manufacturing company. It has also produced the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) for the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Key Points

About Hindustan-228 (Do-228):

- The 19-seater Do-228 is the first major attempt in India to develop a small civil transport aircraft after the 14-seater Saras Aircraft development program at the National Aeronautics Laboratory (NAL) was shelved in 2009 on account of multiple problems in its development.
- However, the NAL has been pitching SARAS Mk-2 (19-seater aircraft) for the government’s UDAN, since it has the capacity to operate in “ill-equipped”, “semi-prepared” and “unpaved airstrips”.
- It is built on the existing frame of the German Dornier 228 defence transport aircraft used by the defence forces.
- Two civil Do-228 produced by HAL for launch under UDAN scheme have a maximum take off weight of 6200 kgs.
- It is equipped with a digital cockpit which will ensure more accurate readings, precise information and required data displays with feedback loops and capability for self-check to alert pilots in emergencies.
- It is conceived to be a multirole utility aircraft capable of being used for VIP transport, passenger transport, air ambulance, flight inspection roles, cloud seeding, recreational activities like para jumping, aerial surveillance, photography, remote sensing and cargo transport.
- With a maximum cruise speed of 428 kmph and a range of 700 kmph the aircraft is capable of night flying.
- HAL is looking forward to exporting the aircraft as well to countries like Nepal.

UDAN Scheme:

- Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) was launched as a regional connectivity scheme under the Ministry of Civil Aviation in 2016. It is an innovative scheme to develop the regional Aviation market.
- Small civilian aircrafts are considered to be an essential element of the UDAN.
- The objective of the scheme is to create affordable yet economically viable and profitable flights on regional routes so that flying becomes affordable to the common man even in small towns.
- The scheme envisages providing connectivity to un-served and underserved airports of the country through the revival of existing air-strips and airports. The scheme is operational for a period of 10 years.
- Under-served airports are those which do not have more than one flight a day, while unserved airports are those where there are no operations.
- Financial incentives from the Centre, state governments and airport operators are extended to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and under-served airports, and keep airfares affordable.
- About 325 routes and 56 airports including 5 heliports and 2 water aerodromes have been operationalised under the scheme.
- On the commencement of the ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (India@75)’, the Ministry of Civil Aviation proposed about 392 routes under UDAN 4.1 bidding process.
- The UDAN 4.1 focuses on connecting smaller airports, along with special helicopter and seaplane routes. Some new routes have been proposed under the Sagarmala Seaplane services.
- Sagarmala Seaplane Services is an ambitious project under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways with potential airline operators.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. What do you understand by bioethics? Discuss issues related to bioethics in India. (250 words)

Ans.

Introduction**Bioethics**

- Ethical issues concerned with the biological aspects of life and how and when it starts is included in Bioethics.
- It is the branch of the ethics which consists of the analysis of specific, controversial moral issues such as abortion, animal rights, or euthanasia. It helps to use knowledge of moral principles to present dilemmas.

The four common principles of Bioethics are:

- **Nonmaleficence:** One should avoid causing harm. The healthcare professional should not harm the patient. All treatment involves some harm, even if minimal, but the harm should not be disproportionate to the benefits of treatment.
- **Justice:** Benefits and risks should be fairly distributed. The notion that patients in similar positions should be treated in a similar manner.
- **Beneficence:** One should take positive steps to help others. The healthcare professional should act in a way that benefits the patient
- **Autonomy:** One should respect the right of individuals to make their own decisions by respecting the decision making capacities of autonomous persons; enabling individuals to make reasoned informed choices.

Body**Issues related to bioethics in India**

- **Euthanasia:** In India, euthanasia/ "mercy –killing" of terminally ill patients has been a controversial bioethical issue. Proponents of Physician-Assisted Suicide (PAS) feel that an individual's right to autonomy automatically entitles him to choose a painless death.
- The opponents feel that a physician's role in the death of an individual violates the central tenet of the medical profession - a Life versus dignity. We allow Passive Euthanasia but we don't allow Active Euthanasia.
- **Stem Cell Research:** The immense potential that has been shown by stem cells in the treatment of "degenerative, incurable and irreversible" diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, spinal cord injuries, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's disease has brought them into the spotlight. The debate around stem cells as therapy includes socio, political, cultural and ethical issues. The concerns related to designer babies has raised serious bio-ethical issues.
- There was a public outcry over the delivery of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine administered to girls in Andhra Pradesh by an international foundation. The tribal department of the state had come out with an order that girls' parents need not be contacted for consent and that principals of the tribal schools may provide consent. It is not ethical to administer the vaccine to minor girls without their parents' informed consent.
- **Relaxed norms for clinical trials:** Government had come up with stringent regulations regarding clinical trials in 2013. Since 2014, these regulations are being gradually relaxed. Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has decided to waive off Phase III clinical trials except where it is specifically necessary if the drug has been approved in US, Australia, Japan, Canada or Europe, because of the bio-ethical issues involved.
- **Abortion:** The social, cultural, religious, legal and political context of abortion is complex. This is complicated by advances in medical technology. A range of prenatal diagnostic technologies and the emergence of preconception and genetics-based technologies more recently have made it possible to know the status of the foetus in terms of sex or other "abnormalities". This has encouraged women and their families to seek selective abortions including sex-based ones also.

Conclusion

- Each situation is quite unique and complex. And, we have to negotiate with many factors before we really come with a final solution. The Bioethicist in the modern age should be sensitive to all these factors that play important roles in shaping Ethical values and principles in modern societies.

DAILY QUIZ

1. With reference to Shankaracharya, consider the following statements:
1. He propounded the Doctrine of Advaita.
 2. Brahmastutrabhasya and Bhajagovinda Stotra are the major works of Shankaracharya.
 3. He was responsible for reviving Hinduism in India when Buddhism was gaining popularity.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3**

2. Consider the following statements regarding Loktak Lake:
1. It is the largest freshwater lake in the North-east region of India.
 2. It is popularly known as Madhuri Lake.

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. With reference to the Heat Waves, consider the following statements:
1. It is a condition of air temperature which becomes fatal to the human body when exposed.
 2. It mainly occurs in the pre-monsoon season.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2**
- d) Neither 1 and 2

4. Consider the following statements:
1. Dravidian languages are spoken in India and Sri Lanka only.
 2. Kurukh are the Dravidian-speaking Scheduled Tribes of Andhra Pradesh.

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 Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) scheme, consider the following statements:
1. The scheme aims at imparting vocational skill training at the doorstep of the beneficiaries with a minimum cost and infrastructure.
 2. It is implemented through NGOs with 100% grants from the Government of India.

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