

ECONOMY**Anti-Dumping Duty**

As per Directorate General of Trade Remedies' (DGTR) recommendations, India has imposed Anti-Dumping Duties on five Chinese products, including certain aluminium goods and some chemicals, for five years. The DGTR has concluded that these products have been exported at a price below normal value in Indian markets, which has resulted in dumping, causing injury to domestic markets.

- India's exports to China during the April-September 2021 period were worth USD 12.26 billion while imports aggregated at USD 42.33 billion, leaving a Trade Deficit of USD 30.07 billion.

Directorate General of Trade Remedies

- It is the apex national authority under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for administering all trade remedial measures including anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguard measures.
- It provides trade defence support to the domestic industry and exporters in dealing with increasing instances of trade remedy investigations instituted against them by other countries.

Key Points**Dumping:**

- Dumping is said to occur when the goods are exported by a country to another country at a price lower than the price it normally charges in its own home market.
- This is an unfair trade practice which can have a distortive effect on international trade.

Objective of Anti-Dumping Duty (ADD):

- Imposition of Anti-dumping duty is a measure to rectify the situation arising out of the dumping of goods and its trade distortive effect. In the long-term, anti-dumping duties can reduce the international competition of domestic companies producing similar goods.
- It is a protectionist tariff that a domestic government imposes on foreign imports that it believes are priced below fair market value.
- The use of anti-dumping measures as an instrument of fair competition is permitted by the World Trade Organisation.

Different from Countervailing Duties:

- ADD is a customs duty on imports providing a protection against the dumping of goods at prices substantially lower than the normal value whereas Countervailing duty is a customs duty on goods that have received government subsidies in the originating or exporting country.

WTO's Provisions Related to Anti-Dumping Duty:

- **Validity:** An anti-dumping duty is valid for a period of five years from the date of imposition unless revoked earlier.
- **Sunset Review:** It can be extended for a further period of five years through a sunset or expiry review investigation.

1. A Sunset review/ expiry review is an evaluation of the need for the continued existence of a program or an agency. It allows for an assessment of the effectiveness and performance of the program or agency.
2. Such a review can be initiated suo moto or on the basis of a duly substantiated request received from or on behalf of the domestic industry.

GOVERNANCE**Good Governance Index 2021**

On the occasion of the Good Governance Day (25th December), the government released the Good Governance Index 2021. The index was prepared by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

Earlier this year, India was ranked 49th in the Chandler Good Government Index (CGGI).

Key Points**About:**

- GGI is a comprehensive and implementable framework to assess the State of Governance across the States and UTs which enables ranking of States/Districts.
- The objective of GGI is to create a tool that can be used uniformly across the States to assess the impact of various interventions taken up by the Central and State Governments including UTs.
- Based on the GGI Framework, the Index provides a comparative picture among the States while developing a competitive spirit for improvement.
- The GGI 2021 says that 20 States have improved their composite GGI scores over the GGI 2019 index scores.
- The GGI is envisaged as a biannual exercise.

Basis of the Ranking:

- It is based on ten sectors and 58 indicators. The sectors are
 1. Agriculture and Allied Sectors
 2. Commerce & Industries
 3. Human Resource Development
 4. Public Health
 5. Public Infrastructure & Utilities
 6. Economic Governance
 7. Social Welfare & Development
 8. Judicial & Public Security
 9. Environment
 10. Citizen-Centric Governance

Ranking of the States: The Index categorises States and UTs into four categories, i.e.,

- **Other States – Group A:** Gujarat has topped the composite ranking in the Good Governance Index 2021 covering 10 sectors, followed by Maharashtra and Goa.
- **Other States – Group B:** Madhya Pradesh tops the list followed by Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh.
- **North-East and Hill States:** Himachal Pradesh topped the list followed by Mizoram and Uttarakhand.
- **Union Territories:** Delhi tops the composite rank registering a 14% increase over the GGI 2019 indicators.

Other Initiatives for Good Governance:

1. National e-Governance Plan
2. Right to Information Act, 2005
3. Digital India
4. MyGov

ENVIRONMENT

Winter Air pollution in North India

The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has analyzed air quality trends with special focus on cities outside Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR). The latest analysis by the has found that when pollution spikes during winter, entire northern India experiences smog episodes.

Key Points
About:

- This analysis aims to understand the synchronised pattern of pollution during winter when atmospheric changes entrap pollution across the region.
- This analysis has covered 137 continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations (CAAQMS) spread across 56 cities in the six states. CAAQMS facilitates in measuring a real time monitoring of Air Pollution, including particulate matter, all round the year.
- The northern region has been divided into five sub-regions which include:
 1. Punjab and Chandigarh
 2. NCR (includes Delhi and 26 other cities/towns that fall within NCR)
 3. Haryana (excluding cities already included in NCR)
 4. Uttar Pradesh (excluding cities in NCR)
 5. Rajasthan (excluding cities in NCR).
- This is an assessment of annual and seasonal trends in PM 2.5 concentration for the period 1st January 2019 to 30th November, 2021.

Methodology and Data:

- A huge volume of data points have been cleaned and data gaps have been addressed based on the USEPA (United States Environmental Protection Agency) method.
- Meteorological data for the analysis is sourced from the Palam weather station of the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- Fire count data is from National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s Fire Information for Resource Management System, specifically the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS).
- Estimates of contribution of farm stubble fire smoke to Delhi's air quality is sourced from the Union Ministry of Earth Science's System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR).

Important Findings:

- **Pollution levels in smaller towns:** Most smaller towns have considerably lower annual average PM2.5 levels, but during early winter when the smog engulfs the entire region and farm stubble fires spike it further, smaller towns report levels comparable to Delhi.

- **Early winter smog is synchronised across the region, but lasts longer in Delhi-NCR:** Normally, the smog episodes of November synchronise across the northern region.
 1. But they linger longer only in Delhi, NCR and Uttar Pradesh during the rest of the winter.
 2. Atmospheric changes during winter that lead to inversion, calm conditions, change in wind direction, and seasonal drop in ambient temperature entraps pollution across north India.
 3. This is further tripped into a severe category by smoke from farm fires and Diwali firecrackers during November.
- **Number of days with air quality in 'very poor' and 'severe' categories:** Delhi and NCR cities lead the chart for the most 'severe' days in 2021.
- **Cities vulnerable to the pollution build-up:** While the whole of north India is vulnerable to the pollution build-up, the overall annual average of Delhi and NCR is among the highest in the region.
- **Industrial towns remain vulnerable throughout the year:** The heavy and prolonged monsoon this year brought down PM 2.5 levels substantially across the region. Even though the monsoon reduced overall pollution in the region, the levels in industrial cities were comparatively higher than other cities during monsoon.
- **Problem of farm fires:** Farm fires are one of the biggest episodic events during winter.
 1. Two levels of analysis have been carried out: The daily trend in fire count and the trend in average Fire Radiative Power (FRP) reported by NASA satellites.
 - FRP is the rate of emitted radiative energy by the fire at the time of observation that is reported in MW (megawatts).
 - FRP is considered a better measure of emissions from biomass burning as intensity of FRP indicates the quantum of biomass burned.
 2. This year, Punjab has noted the maximum number of fires after Haryana, UP, Rajasthan and Delhi.
- **Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels:** There is a significant increase in the amount of NO₂ in air during November compared to October and September. NO₂ comes entirely from combustion sources and significantly, from vehicles.
- **Diwali continues to be a mega pollution event:** Despite the restrictions on bursting firecrackers, Diwali night still got extremely toxic.

Initiatives to Control Air Pollution

1. The Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region (NCR) and Adjoining Areas.
2. Bharat Stage (BS) VI norms.
3. Dashboard for Monitoring Air Quality.
4. National Clean Air Programme.
5. National Air Quality Index (AQI).
6. Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
7. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY).

Way Forward

- The analysis has put a spotlight on the cities of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi and NCR to understand the synchronised pattern of pollution during winter when atmospheric changes entrap pollution across the region.
 1. It shows even smaller cities with lower annual average levels, record pollution levels that are as bad or even worse than Delhi.
 2. This demands action at scale and speed across all key sectors of pollution in the larger region.
- The stark evidence from the northern region underscores the urgent need for harmonised action in all states to ensure access to clean fuels and technology in industry and power plants, massive scaling up of public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure and enhanced municipal services for complete segregation of waste and recycling.

PRELIMS FACT

Kisan Diwas

The 'Kisan Diwas' or National Farmers Day is observed across the country on 23rd December to celebrate the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, the former Prime Minister of India. It is celebrated to promote awareness among the citizens to understand the importance of the contributions of the farmers to the society and overall economic and social development of a country.

Government also aims to encourage the farmers across the country by organising various activities like debates and seminars on agriculture.

Key Points

- He was born in 1902 at Noorpur in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh and was the Prime Minister of India from 28th July 1979 to 14th January 1980.

- Being a proponent of rural and agricultural development he made continuous efforts for keeping agriculture at the centre of planning for India.
- He was given the nickname 'Champion of India's Peasants' for his work towards upliftment of farmers and development of agriculture throughout the country.
- He took a leading part in formulation and finalisation of the Debt Redemption Bill 1939, in order to give relief to the peasantry from moneylenders.
- He was instrumental in bringing about the Land Holding Act, 1960 which was aimed at lowering the ceiling on land holdings to make it uniform throughout the State.
- He left Congress in 1967 and formed his independent party known as the Bharatiya Lok Dal.
- He served twice as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. He became Prime Minister of India in 1979.
- He was the author of several books and pamphlets, including 'Abolition of Zamindari', 'Co-operative Farming X-rayed', 'India's Poverty and its Solution', 'Peasant Proprietorship or Land to the Workers' and 'Prevention of Division of Holdings Below a Certain Minimum'.

Importance of Agriculture in India

- Almost half of India's rural households have insignificant stakes in agriculture.
- According to the 2019 Situation Assessment Survey (SAS), there are 93.1 million agricultural households in rural India.
- An agricultural household is defined as one which produced field or horticultural crops, livestock, or other specified agricultural products worth more than Rs 4,000 and had a member self-employed in agriculture in the 365 days preceding the survey.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. In aftermath of the pandemic, our actions today to prevent child labour will determine the future of children tomorrow. Elucidate. (250 words)

Ans:

Introduction

Child labour typically means the employment of children in any manual work with or without payment. It is a deep rooted social ill in India. As per the 2011 Census, in the age group 5-14 years, 10.1 million of 259.6 million constituted working children. The true extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child labour is yet to be measured but all indications show that it would be significant as children are unable to attend school and parents are unable to find work. However, not all the factors that contribute to child labour were created by the pandemic; most of them were pre-existing and have been exposed or amplified by it.

Body

Child labour in India:

- The number of children working as child labourers came down by 100 million in last two decades (1991 to 2011) which demonstrates that the right combination of policy and programmatic interventions can make a difference; but COVID-19 pandemic has undone a lot of gains
- The Covid-19 crisis has brought additional poverty to these already vulnerable populations and may reverse years of progress in the fight against child labour- ILO
- A report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF warns that 9 million additional children are at the risk of being pushed into child labour by the end of 2022 globally, as a result of the pandemic.
- In India, the closure of schools and the economic crisis faced by the vulnerable families, triggered by the pandemic, are likely drivers pushing children into poverty and thus, child labour and unsafe migration.
- There has been a significant increase in the proportion of working children from 28.2% to 79.6% out of the 818 children who were surveyed, mainly because of the COVID-19 pandemic and closure of schools, reveals a study conducted by Campaign Against Child Labour (CACL).
- The coronavirus pandemic is forcing India's children out of school and into farms and factories to work, worsening a child-labour problem that was already one of the direst in the world.
- Orphaned children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking and other exploitation like forced begging, or child labour. In such families, there is also the likelihood of older children dropping out of school to support their younger siblings.
- Children are seen as a stop-gap measure to fill jobs left vacant by migrant labourers who fled cities for their rural homes during the lockdown.
- According to the CACL survey, more than 94% of children have said that the economic crisis at home and family pressure had pushed them into work. Most of their parents had lost their jobs or earned very low wages during the pandemic.

- A total of 591 children were rescued from forced work and bonded labour from different parts of India during the lockdown by Bachpan Bachao Andolan, a civil society group on children's rights

Challenges before policy makers with respect to child labour.

- The pandemic is hampering enforcement of anti-child labour laws, with fewer workplace inspections and less vigorous pursuit of human traffickers.
- NGOs point to the fact that the real spike in child labour is yet to come. When economic activity begins accelerating, there is a risk of returning migrants taking children along with them to the cities.
- Children's access to education, basic nutrition and other critical requirements for their development and wellbeing, have suffered a huge setback and many new children have fallen into the trap of forced labour along with further deteriorated conditions for the existing child labourers.
- Child labour is not uniform. It takes many forms depending upon the type of work that children are made to do, the age and sex of the child and whether they work independently or with families. Due to this complex nature of child labour, there is no one strategy that can be used to eliminate it.
- Incoherency between laws that prescribe a minimum age for employment and those for completion of compulsory school education. It also means that the expansion of quality universal basic education has to extend beyond the fulfilment of statutory provisions.

Way Forward

- Abolition of child trafficking, elimination of poverty, free and compulsory education, and basic standards of living can reduce the problem to a great extent.
- **Legal measures**
 1. Strict implementation of labour laws is also essential in order to prevent exploitation by parties or multinational companies
 2. Child Protection Committees should work efficiently to identify vulnerable children and support their families through social protection schemes.
- Strengthening policy and legislative enforcement, and building the capacities of government, workers' and employers' organisations as well as other partners at national, State and community levels should be prioritized.
- **Education**
 1. Spreading literacy and education is a potent weapon against the practice of child labour, because illiterate persons do not understand the implications of child labour
 2. The single most effective way to stem the flow of school-aged children into child labour is to improve access to and quality of schooling.
 3. School authorities need to ensure that every student will have free lunches at home until schools open. Special efforts should be taken to identify children orphaned due to COVID-19, and arrangements of shelter and foster care for them should be made on a priority basis.
 4. Financial support or relaxation of school fees and other related school expenses should be given to those children who wouldn't be able to return to school otherwise
- **Eradicate Unemployment**
 1. Another way to stop child labour is to eliminate or rein in unemployment. Because of inadequate employment, many families cannot afford to meet all their expenses. If employment opportunities are increased, they will be able to let their children read and write and become worthy citizens
 2. Coordinated policy efforts should be taken to provide employment and income support to all informal sector workers to stimulate the economy and labour demand.
- Continued progress against child labour requires policies that help mitigate the economic vulnerability of households.
- Accelerating progress towards universal social protection is key, as social protection helps prevent poor households from having to rely on child labour as a coping mechanism.
- **Attitude change**
 1. It is important that the attitudes and mind-sets of people are changed to instead employ adults and allow all children to go to school and have the chance to learn, play and socialize as they should.
 2. A sector-wide culture of child labour-free businesses has to be nurtured.

Conclusion

These measures will no doubt respond to the emergency needs that COVID-19 has generated and also ease the life of children directly or indirectly to some extent. However, it is clear that more needs to be done to prevent children from lapsing into child labour.

Eliminating child labour is firmly placed within Goal 8 of the SDGs. A stronger nexus between the discourse on SDGs and the discourse on eliminating child labour can take the advantage of complementarities and synergies of a wide range of actors engaged in both areas of work. The fight against child labour is not just the responsibility of one, it is the responsibility of all.

DAILY QUIZ

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. The frequency of “very severe cyclonic storms” has increased in recent years over the Arabian Sea.
2. The rising temperature due to global warming is enabling the Arabian Sea to supply ample energy for the intensification of cyclones.

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

Q2. Consider the following g statements about National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA):

1. It is an apex Body of Government of India, with a mandate to lay down policies for disaster management.
2. It works under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
3. It is headed by the Home Minister of India and can have up to nine other members.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q3. With reference to Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, consider the following statements:

1. The Act provides that the central government may cancel the registration of Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) on certain grounds.
2. The objective of the CAA is to grant Indian citizenship to all persecuted minorities around the world.

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

Q4. Consider the following statements about the Bird Flu:

1. It is caused by infection with avian (bird) influenza (flu) Type A viruses.
2. The most common route of virus transmission is direct contact.

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

Q5. Consider the following statements about the World Gold Council:

1. It is an association whose members comprise the world’s leading gold mining companies.
2. It headquartered in Surat, Gujarat, 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