

SOCIAL ISSUE**National Girl Child Day**

India celebrates National Girl Child Day every year on 24th January.

Key Points**About:**

- The National Girl Child Day was first initiated in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- The main focus is on changing society's attitude towards girls, decrease female feticide and create awareness about the decreasing sex ratio.

'Save The Girl Child' Webinar:

- It was organised by the National Commission for Women (NCW) to promote rights of girl child and to increase awareness on various topics concerning girls including their education, health and nutrition.

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar-2022:

- Twenty-nine children were given the award on the occasion for their exceptional achievements in innovation, social science, education, sports, arts and culture and for demonstrating bravery.
- They were given digital certificates using blockchain technology and a cash prize of Rs. 1 lakh at an event held online.

Issues Related to Girl Child**Female Infanticide and Foeticide:**

- India has one of the highest rates of female foeticide in the world.
- Female foeticide is due to strong son preference, the practice of dowry and the patrilineal necessity of heir.
- The census of 2011 has recorded the lowest ever sex ratio of 914 in the age group 0-6 years with 3 million missing girls; from 78.8 million in 2001 to 75.8 million in 2011.

Child Marriage:

- Each year, at least 1.5 million girls under 18 get married in India, which makes it home to the largest number of child brides in the world - accounting for a third of the global total. Nearly 16% of adolescent girls aged 15-19 are currently married.
- While child marriage has declined, it has been marginal: from 27% in 2015-16 to 23% in 2019-20, according to National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 5.

Education:

- Girls are encouraged and also engaged more in household work and drop out of school at an early age. A study by the International Centre for Research on Women has found that girls out of school are 3.4 times more likely to be married or have their marriage already fixed than girls who are still in school.

Health and Mortality:

- Girls in India face discrimination both inside their homes and outside in their communities. Inequality in India means unequal opportunities for girls.
- Under-five mortality for girls in India remains 8.3% higher than for boys. Globally this is 14% higher for boys.

Steps taken by the Government

- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao:** Launched in 2015 with the aim to address sex selective abortion and the declining child sex ratio which was at 918 girls for every 1,000 boys in 2011.
- **Sukanya Samridhi Yojana:** Launched in 2015, in order to promote the welfare of girl child. It encourages parents to invest and build funds for the future studies and marriage expenses of the girl's children.
- **CBSE Udaan Scheme:** UDAAN is a project launched by the CBSE to address the low enrolment of girl students in prestigious engineering institutions and the teaching gap between school education and engineering entrance examinations.
- **National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education (NSIGSE):** It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme launched in 2008, which aims to promote enrollment of girl child in the age group of 14-18 at secondary stage, especially those who passed Class VIII and to encourage the secondary education of such girls.

Way Forward

- The answer to delaying child marriages lies in ensuring access to education since the practice is a social and economic issue. Skill & business training and sex education in schools, will also help..

- An awareness campaign is required on a massive scale on the increase in age of marriage, and to encourage social acceptance of this new legislation (Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill), which would be far more effective than coercive measures.
The NFHS findings are also a reminder of the urgent need to close gaps in girls' education and address the pathetic nutritional status of women and children.

INTERNATIONAL RELATION

Army Rule in Burkina Faso

Recently, Burkina Faso's army announced that it had ousted President Roch Kabore, suspended the constitution, dissolved the government and the national assembly, and closed the country's borders. Army has toppled governments over the past 18 months in Mali and Guinea.

The military also took over in Chad last year (2021) after President Idriss Deby died fighting rebels on the battlefield in the country's north.

Key Points

Burkina Faso:

- A former French colony, Burkina Faso has suffered chronic instability since gaining independence in 1960, including several coups.
- The country's name, meaning "land of the honest men", was picked by revolutionary military officer Thomas Sankara who took power in 1983. He was toppled and killed in 1987.
- Since 2015, the country has been fighting an Islamist insurgency that spilled over from neighbouring Mali. This has fuelled anger in the military and damaged the once important tourist industry.
- Landlocked Burkina Faso, one of West Africa's poorest countries despite being a gold producer, has experienced numerous coups since independence from France in 1960.
- Islamist militants control swathes of Burkina Faso's territory and have forced residents in some areas to abide by their harsh version of Islamic law, while the military's struggle to quell the insurgency has drained scarce national resources.
- Kabore had faced waves of protests in recent months amid frustration over killings of civilians and soldiers by militants, some of whom have links to Islamic State and al Qaeda. The discontent escalated in November 2021, when 53 people, mainly members of the security forces, were killed by suspected jihadists.

About:

- The announcement cited the deterioration of the security situation and what the army described as Kabore's inability to unite the West African nation and effectively respond to challenges, which include an Islamist insurgency.
- The statement was made in the name of a previously unheard-of entity, the Patriotic Movement for Safeguard and Restoration, or MPSR, its French-language acronym. MPSR, which includes all sections of the army.
- The MPSR said it would propose a calendar for a return to constitutional order "within a reasonable time frame, after consultations with various sections of the nation."
- The military also announced the closure of Burkina Faso's borders.

Global Response:

- African and Western powers denounced what they called an "attempted coup" and the European Union demanded the "immediate" release of the President.
- The United States also called for the President's release and urged "members of the security forces to respect Burkina Faso's constitution and civilian leadership."
- The United Nations' Secretary-General strongly condemns any attempted takeover of the government by the force of arm in Burkina Faso and calls on the coup leaders to lay down their weapons.
- The African Union and regional bloc, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), have also condemned the forceful takeover of power, with ECOWAS saying it holds the soldiers responsible for the deposed president's well-being.
 1. The African Union is a continental body that consists of 55 states belonging to the African continent.
 2. ECOWAS is made up of fifteen member countries that are located in the Western African region.

ECONOMY

Push to Electronic Manufacturing in India

India is likely to achieve electronics production of USD300 billion by 2026, lower than the target of USD400 billion by 2025 set as per the National Policy on Electronics (NPE) 2019. The given estimate is according to a 5-year roadmap and vision document titled “USD300 bn Sustainable Electronics Manufacturing & Exports by 2026” released by the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) in association with the India Cellular & Electronics Association (ICEA).

- ICEA is the apex industry body of the mobile and electronics industry comprising manufacturers.
- This roadmap is the second volume of a two-part vision document – the first of which titled “Increasing India’s Electronics Exports and Share in Global Value Chain (GVCs)” was released in November 2021.

Key Points

Growth of Electronics Manufacturing:

- According to the document, the reduced target still aims for a 400% increase from the current level.
- Mobile manufacturing that is expected to cross USD100 billion annual production - up from the current USD30 billion - is expected to constitute nearly 40% of this ambitious growth.

Products Expected to Lead:

- Amongst the key products that are expected to lead India’s growth in electronics manufacturing include Mobile Phones, IT Hardware (laptops, tablets), Consumer electronics (TV and audio), Industrial electronics, Auto electronics, Electronic components, LED Lighting, Strategic electronics, PCBA (Printed Circuit Board Assembly), Wearables and hearables, and Telecom equipment.

Challenges:

- There are various challenges being faced by the industry across qualitative (non-tariff, infrastructure related) and quantitative (tariff, free trade agreements etc.) aspects.

Suggestions:

- For achieving the target of USD300 billion in electronics manufacturing by 2025-26, primary focus must be building of scale through incentives and removal of cost disabilities.
- The documents also called for ‘swift changes’ in respect of existing policies within the next 1,000 days, including stability in import tariffs, decrease in import tariffs for components with no manufacturing base in India, development of skill sets and encouraging major foreign manufacturers to set up components ecosystems in India.
- It makes a strong recommendation on the need to focus on aggregate domestic value addition in the electronics sector, as India transforms from its current state to one that is gearing to compete with the likes of China and Vietnam.
- It also details the importance of the key role Indian champions will play in addition to global companies – both of whom are already part of the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes. The USD300 billion electronics manufacturing comes on the back of the USD10 billion PLI Scheme announced by the government to propel forward the Semiconductor and Display ecosystem. The government has committed nearly USD17 billion over the next 6 years across four PLI Schemes – Semiconductor and Design, Smartphones, IT Hardware and Components.

Related Initiatives:

- Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECES)
- Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) Scheme
- Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme

India Electronics Manufacturing industry

About:

- Electronics manufacturing had grown from USD37.1 billion in 2015-16 to USD67.3 billion in 2020-21. However, Covid-19 related disruptions impacted the growth trajectory in 2020-21 and led to a decline in the manufacturing output to USD67.3 billion.
- According to the document, there has been a complete shift in strategy which goes beyond the vision of import substitution to "Make in India for the World".
- This fresh outlook is aimed at transforming India's manufacturing prowess by focusing on competitiveness, scale and exports.
- Furthermore, continuing on the path of import substitution, India's domestic electronics market is estimated to reach at best USD150-180 billion from the current USD65 billion over the next 4-5 years. Thus, exports of USD120-140 billion are critical to reach the USD300 billion mark for electronics manufacturing.

- This, in turn, is key for the USD5 trillion economy, USD1 trillion digital economy, and the USD1 trillion export target envisaged by MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, respectively.

Importance:

- The increasing labour costs in China, the geo-political trade and security environment, and the Covid-19 outbreak are compelling many global electronics majors to look at alternative manufacturing destinations and diversifying their supply chains.
- India is one of the leading contenders for alternate solutions for global electronics companies.
- The electronics sector has the potential to become one of the top exports of India in the next 3-5 years. Electronics exports may account for significant contributions to the Indian economy in terms of foreign exchange earnings and employment generation.

PRELIMS FACT

Subhash Chandra Bose Awards for Disaster Management

The Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management (GIDM) and Professor Vinod Sharma, the founder co-ordinator of the National Centre of Disaster Management, have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for 2022 for their excellent work in disaster management. The GIDM was established in 2012 and since then it has been working to enhance the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) capacity of Gujarat.

Professor Vinod Sharma has worked tirelessly towards bringing DRR to the forefront of the national agenda.

Key Points

About the Awards:

- The central government has instituted the annual award —Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar—to recognise and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in India in the field of disaster management.
- The award is announced every year on 23rd January, the birth anniversary of freedom fighter Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
- It carries a cash prize of Rs. 51 lakh and a certificate in the case of an institution and Rs. 5 lakh and a certificate in the case of an individual.

Disaster Risk Management:

- Disaster Risk Management implies the systematic process of using administrative decisions, organisation, operational skills, and capacities to implement policies, strategies and coping capacities of the society and communities to lessen the impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters.
- These comprise all forms of activities including structural and non- structural measures to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse effects of hazards.
- There are three key stages of activities in disaster management:
 1. **Before a disaster:** To reduce the potential for human, material, or environmental losses caused by hazards and to ensure that these losses are minimised when disaster strikes;
 2. **During a disaster:** To ensure that the needs and provisions of victims are met to alleviate and minimise suffering; and
 3. **After a disaster:** To achieve rapid and durable recovery which does not reproduce the original vulnerable conditions.
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was adopted at the Third UN World Conference in Sendai, Japan, in 2015. The Sendai Framework is the successor instrument to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters.
- The different phases of disaster management are represented in the disaster cycle diagram.



DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. Do you think the move to raise the age of marriage for women to 21 years is a step in the right direction? Identify some of the challenges that will be faced in urban and rural areas by such a move. (250 words)

Introduction

The Union Cabinet on December 15 took the decision to raise the legal age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years. The legal age of marriage for men is 21 years. With this decision, the government will be bringing the age of marriage for both men and women at par. The proposal to raise the minimum age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 was based on the recommendations of a task force headed by Jaya Jaitley.

Body**Background**

- In June 2020, the Ministry for Women and Child Development set up a task force to look into the correlation between the age of marriage with issues of women's nutrition, prevalence of anaemia, IMR, MMR and other social indices.
- The committee, headed by former Samata Party president Jaya Jaitly, also had on board NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul and secretaries of several ministries.
- The committee has recommended the age of marriage be increased to 21 years, on the basis of feedback they received from young adults from 16 universities across the country. Over 15 NGOs were also engaged to reach out to young adults in far-flung areas and marginalised communities.

Rationale behind raising marriageable age for women

- **Nutrition levels and wellbeing:** The government decided to re-examine the age of marriage for women for a number of reasons, including gender-neutrality. An early age of marriage, and consequent early pregnancies, also have impacts on nutritional levels of mothers and their children, and their overall health and mental wellbeing.
- **Mortality rate:** It also has an impact on Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Rate, and the empowerment of women who are cut off from access to education and livelihood after an early marriage.
- **To reduce child marriage:** The recently released National Family Health Survey (NFHS) revealed that child marriage has come down marginally from 27 per cent in 2015-16 to 23 per cent in 2019-20 in the country, but the government has been pushing to bring this down further.
- **Gender neutrality:** Women Labour force participation is only 25% in India whereas the global average is 60%, to become world power, we cannot afford women to be out of service. There is a need to bring in gender-neutrality.
- **Removing stereotypes:** In a consultation paper of reform in family law in 2018, the Law Commission argued that having different legal standards "contributes to the stereotype that wives must be younger than their husbands". Women's rights activists too have argued that the law perpetuates the stereotype that women are more mature than men of the same age and therefore can be allowed to marry sooner.

Possible challenges that would be posed to urban and rural women

- Child and women's rights activists, as well as population and family planning experts have not been in favour of increasing the age of marriage for women on the basis that such a legislation would push a large portion of the population into illegal marriages.
- They have contended that even with the legal age of marriage for women being kept at 18 years, child marriages continue in India and a decrease in such marriages has not been because of the existing law but because of increase in girl's education and employment opportunities.
- They have said the law would end up being coercive, and in particular negatively impact marginalised communities, such as the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, making them law-breakers.
- According to the State of the World Report 2020 by UNFPA, in India, 51% of young women with no education and 47% of those with only a primary education had married by age 18. Hence lack of education is a bigger problem.
- Further, a study by the International Centre for Research on Women has found that girls out of school are 3.4 times more likely to be married or have their marriage already fixed than girls who are still in school.

Way forward and conclusion

- For any society to make sustainable progress it is necessary to empower women and for that two most important weapons are quality of education and skills and for this they should not be under any pressure to get married early.
- Early pregnancy is associated with increased child mortality rates and affects the health of the mother. Thus, there is a need to focus on a mother's health and readiness to carry a child.

- Government needs to emphasize upon economic and social empowerment of women and girls, as well as targeted social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) campaigns. Increasing the minimum age of marriage of women will also lead to gender-neutrality.
- Extending the scope of the Right to Education for girls up to vocational studies.

DAILY QUIZ

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. The Representation of the People Act, 1951 empowers the Election Commission of India to allot party symbols.
2. The Supreme Court of India is the only authority to decide issues on a dispute or a merger of political parties.

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 statements about the Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY):

1. It is a financial inclusion program of the Government of India.
2. It provides RuPay Debit card having inbuilt life insurance cover of ₹ 1 lakh.

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

Q3. Consider the following statements about NISAR (satellite) mission:

1. It is a joint project between NASA and ISRO.
2. The satellite will be the first radar imaging satellite to use dual frequencies.
3. It will be used for remote sensing, to observe and understand natural processes on Earth.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

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

Q4. Chala Reserve Forest was in news recently, is located in:

- a. Assam**
- b. Sikkim
- c. Odisha
- d. Madhya Pradesh

Q5. In India, 'extended producer responsibility' was introduced as an important feature in which of the following?

- a. The Bio-medical Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1998
- b. The Recycled plastic (Manufacturing and Usage) Rules, 1999
- c. The e-Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011**
- d. The Food Safety and Standard Regulations, 2011