

HEALTH**STATUS OF MALNUTRITION IN INDIA**

CONTEXT : Recently, it has been observed that Malnutrition in India is a worry in a modern scenario.

Malnutrition

- It refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person's intake of energy and/or nutrients.
- The term malnutrition covers 2 broad groups of conditions and these are :
 - 'Undernutrition'—It includes stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), underweight (low weight for age) and micronutrient deficiencies or insufficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals).
 - The other is overweight, obesity and diet-related noncommunicable diseases (such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer).

Malnutrition in India

- In India, child malnutrition has been improving gradually.
- The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) has shown marginal improvement in different nutrition indicators, indicating that the pace of progress is slow.
- Between the last two NFHSs conducted in 2015-16 and 2019-21, children who are underweight reduced by 3.7 percentage points, those who are stunted reduced by 2.9 percentage points, and those who are wasted reduced by 1.7 percentage points.
- There has been some progress in tackling malnutrition among children and women over the past decade.

Issues and Concerns

- **Less Diet**
 - India's greatest national treasure is its people, especially women and children but even after 75 years of independence, a majority of them do not get the required diet to meet their nutritional needs.
 - A child's nutritional status is directly linked to their mother.
 - Poor nutrition among pregnant women affects the nutritional status of the child and has a greater chance to affect future generations.
- **Prevalence of Anaemia**
 - India also has the highest prevalence of anaemia in the world .
 - The NFHS-5 survey indicates that more than 57% of women (15-49 years) and over 67% children (six-59 months) suffer from anaemia.
- **Budgetary issues**
 - Saksham Anganwadi and the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) 2.0 programme have seen only a marginal increase in budgetary allocation this year (₹20,263 crore from ₹20,105 crore in 2021-22).
- **Under utilisation of funds**
 - Additionally, 32% of funds released under POSHAN Abhiyaan to States and Union Territories have not been utilised.

Impacts

- Undernourished children are at risk of under-performing in studies and have limited job prospects.
- This vicious cycle restrains the development of the country, whose workforce, affected mentally and physically, has reduced work capacity.
 - Developing countries lose up to 4.05% in GDP per annum due to iron deficiency anaemia; India loses up to 1.18% of GDP annually.
- **Pandemic impact**
 - The pandemic had hit the economy hard, especially the unorganised sectors.
 - Unemployment has also peaked recently and workforce participation has declined.
 - Low incomes, combined with high inflation, will definitely upset the food budget of low-income families.
 - This will lead to increasing rates of malnutrition in the country.

Government Interventions

- **Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS)**
 - Government implements Anganwadi Services, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana and Scheme for Adolescent Girls under the Umbrella ICDS as targeted interventions to address the problem of malnutrition in the country.

- It serves as the most critical instrument in addressing India's child malnutrition challenge.
- It facilitates a supplementary nutrition programme, growth monitoring and promotion, nutrition and health education, immunisation, health check-ups and health referrals, as well as pre-school education.
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan**
 - India launched the POSHAN Abhiyaan, a flagship national nutrition mission to improve nutrition among children, pregnant women and lactating mothers in 2017.
 - The government has prioritised addressing malnutrition through the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) Abhiyaan and with updated POSHAN 2.0 guidelines announced in January 2021.
- **Introduction of community-based programmes**
 - The introduction of community-based programmes for severe acute malnutrition, Jan Andolans, and community-based events, as well as the strengthening collaboration across departments has led to the implementation of a holistic approach to addressing malnutrition.
- **Matritva Sahyog Yojana**
 - Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) is a Conditional Maternity Benefit (CMB) Scheme launched in 2010.
 - The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development as the centrally sponsored scheme.
 - It was launched for pregnant and lactating women to improve their health and nutrition status to better-enable the environment by providing cash incentives to pregnant and nursing mothers.
- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana**
 - The centrally sponsored scheme was launched in 2017.
 - Rs. 6,000 is transferred directly to the bank accounts of pregnant women and lactating mothers for availing better facilities for their delivery to compensate for wage loss and is eligible for the first child of the family.
 - Implementation of the scheme is closely monitored by the central and state governments through the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana-Common Application Software (PMMVY-CAS).
- **Mid-Day Meal Scheme**
 - The Mid-day Meal Scheme is a school meal programme in India designed to better the nutritional standing of school-age children
- **National Food Security Mission**
 - It was launched in 2007-08 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
 - It was based on the recommendations of the agriculture sub-committee of the National Development Council (NDC).
 - It focuses on the sustainable increase in the production of targeted crops through area expansion and productivity enhancement.
- **National Nutrition Mission**
 - It is the government's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.
 - Aim: To reduce stunting and wasting by 2 percent per year (total 6 per cent until 2022) among children and anemia by 3 percent per year (total 9 per cent until 2022) among children, adolescent girls and pregnant women and lactating mothers.

Conclusion & Way Forward

- There is also a need to address gaps and inefficiencies in the present setup through public awareness, community engagement and empowerment.
- There is a greater need now to increase investment in women and children's health and nutrition to ensure their sustainable development and improved quality of life.
- There has to be direct engagement with nutritionally vulnerable groups (this includes the elderly, pregnant women, those with special needs and young children), and contribute toward ensuring last-mile delivery of key nutrition services and interventions.
- There should be a process to monitor and evaluate programmes and address systemic and on the ground challenges.

- The country's response to malnutrition and its growing anaemia burden should be practical and innovative.
- The budget for the ICDS and MDM (mid-day meal) schemes have to be increased to adjust for the rise in commodity and fuel prices.

PRELIMS

1. Updated Map Of Earth's Tectonic Plates

Recently researchers from the University of Adelaide, Australia, have carried out a new study that includes an updated map of the earth's tectonic plates. The paper "New maps of global geological provinces and tectonic plates" is published in the journal Earth-Science Reviews.

About

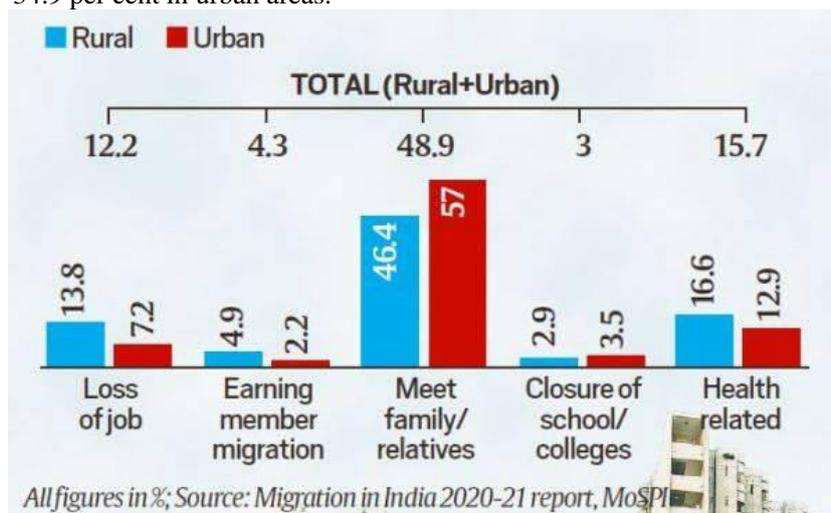
- The new model for tectonic plates better explains the spatial distribution of 90 percent of earthquakes and 80 percent of volcanoes from the past two million years.
 - Existing models only capture 65 percent of earthquakes.
- The map includes several new microplates to the existing tectonic plate model like the
 - Macquarie microplate which sits south of Tasmania and
 - The Capricorn microplate which separates the Indian and Australian plates.
- Researchers found that plate boundary zones account for nearly 16% of the Earth's crust and an even higher proportion, 27%, of continents.
- The new model now includes all the deformation zones north of India as the plate bulldozes its way into Eurasia.

2. Migration in India 2020-21

Recently, a report was released named Migration in India 2020-21, by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

Key findings

- After the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, 0.7 per cent of the country's population was a temporary visitor in households during July 2020-June 2021.
 - Over 84 percent of these moved places for reasons linked to the pandemic, ranging from:
 - Meeting family/relatives/friends (48.9 percent),
 - Loss of job/closure of unit/lack of employment opportunities (12.2 per cent),
 - Migration of earning member (9.2 per cent),
 - Closure of educational institutions and
 - Health related reasons (15.7 per cent).
- The all-India migration **rate** was 28.9 per cent in July-June 2020-21, with:
 - 26.5 percent migration rate in rural areas and
 - 34.9 per cent in urban areas.



- Females recorded a higher share of migration rate of 47.9 percent, with:
 - 48 per cent in rural areas and
 - 47.8 per cent in urban areas.
 - Reason for migration: Among females, the highest level of migration rate was seen at 86.8 percent for marriage,

- The migration rate for males was seen at 10.7 per cent, with:
 - 5.9 per cent in rural areas and
 - 22.5 per cent in urban areas.
 - Reason for migration: 49.6 percent of the males migrated in search of employment, to take up better employment/business/proximity to place of work, or loss of job/closure of unit/lack of employment opportunities.
- Migrated due to migration of parent/earning member of the family, with:
 - 17.5 per cent males and
 - 7.3 per cent females migrated for this reason.

3. **Agnipath Recruitment Scheme**

Recently, the Ministry of Defence announced the Agnipath recruitment scheme for the induction of young soldiers into tri-defence services.

Agnipath Recruitment Scheme

- Around 45,000 to 50,000 soldiers will be recruited annually, and most will leave the service in just four years. Of the total annual recruits, only 25 per cent will be allowed to continue for another 15 years under permanent commission. Recruits under the scheme will be known as “Agniveers”.
- **Features:**
 - Enrolment in all three services: Centralised online system to conduct rallies & campus interviews at recognised technical institutes such as the Industrial Training Institutes, and the National Skills Qualifications Framework.
 - Eligibility criteria: It is only for personnel below officer ranks. On an ‘All India All Class’ basis with the eligibility age ranging from 17.5 to 21 years, with medical and physical fitness standards.
 - Educational qualification: Class X-XII
 - Recruitment will be done twice a year.
 - Pay and Perks: Annual package of ₹4.76 lakh in the first year to ₹6.92 lakh in the fourth year along with hardship allowance.
 - Under the “Seva Nidhi” package (which is exempt from Income Tax), they will receive about ₹11.71 lakh, including contribution and interest, on completion of service.
 - The recruits will have to contribute 30% of their monthly emoluments to Seva Nidhi, with a matching contribution made by the government.
- There will be no entitlement to gratuity and pensionary benefits under the scheme.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. “Earn while you learn scheme needs to be strengthened to make vocational education and skill training meaningful.” Comment. (150 words)

Introduction

Benjamin Franklin once said, “Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn.” ‘Earn while you learn’ scheme provides opportunities to the students to earn while they are learning through part-time jobs. It is a great combination of working & learning and is usually called vocational education.

Body

The Ministry of Tourism runs a Scheme titled ‘Earn While You Learn’ with a view to inculcate appropriate tourism travel traits and knowledge amongst trainees to enable them to work as ‘student volunteers’.

Features/Benefits of the scheme:

- Provides opportunity to students to earn some extra pocket money during college days.
- Chance to get work experience and hands-on training while studying.
- College drop-out rate due to financial issues will come down considerably. It will prepare the students to take up jobs in future and expose them to the outside world.

Need of the scheme to be strengthened:

- It is expected to facilitate the ease of doing business by providing a steady supply of skilled workforce to the industry and services.
- It will lead to improvement in quality and market relevance of manpower.
- It helps students to recognise and understand their choices and preferences and help them build their career.

Conclusion

More awareness about this kind of initiatives by the government should be generated. The success of this scheme will help India reap its demographic dividend to its fullest.

QUIZ

1. Consider the following statements:
 1. The Vaalbara fragmented to form other supercontinents, the last being Pangea, which further segmented into the seven modern continents.
 2. The Macquarie microplate is located South of Sri Lanka and the Capricorn microplate separates the Indonesian and the Australian plates.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- (a) **1 only**
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

2. Which of the following statements are measures to infuse liquidity into the economy:
 1. RBI sells bonds in the market.
 2. RBI involves in dollar swap auctions.
 3. Creation of employment opportunities.
 4. RBI reduces interest rates of repo, reverse repo, CRR, and SLR).

Choose the correct option.

- (a) 1,2 and 4 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) **2,3 and 4 only**
- (d) 1,2,3 and 4

3. Consider the following statements regarding Press-note (PN 3):
 1. It requires that all FDI from an entity based in a country that shares a land border with India can invest only under the government approval route.
 2. It does not apply when the beneficial owner of such FDI is situated in a country that shares a land border with India.
 3. Food products retail trading and banking public sector can be accessed only through a 100% government route.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

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

4. Consider the following statements:
 1. The Agnipath scheme is only for personnel below officer ranks that is those who do not join the forces as commissioned officers.
 2. The individuals who had served under the scheme will get a tax-free amount at the end of the four-year period.
 3. After the scheduled four years, only 25 percent of the batch will be recruited back into their respective services, for a period of 15 years.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

5. Consider the following statements:
 1. A bear market is characterized when the market experiences prolonged price declines.
 2. It typically describes a condition in which securities prices fall 50% due to widespread pessimism and negative investor sentiment.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- (a) **1 only**
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2

- (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. Consider the following statements regarding nixtamalization:
1. Nixtamalization is a method by which the Mesoamericans used to soak and cook their maize in an alkaline solution.
 2. The process induces pellagra, calcium, and mycotoxin into the corn kernels and yields Spherulites polymer as its byproduct.
- Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
- (a) **1 only**
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
7. Consider the following statements:
1. Anocovax is an inactivated SARS-CoV-2 Delta (COVID-19) antigen with Alhydrogel as an adjuvant, exclusively for animals.
 2. Surra is a disease caused by a blood-borne parasite and transmitted by biting flies in animals and is prevalent in all the agro-climatic parts of India.
- Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) **Both 1 and 2**
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Consider the following statements:
1. BrahMos is fired from a range far enough to allow the attacker to evade defensive counter-fire.
 2. The liquid ramjet takes the missile closer to three times the speed of sound in the cruise phase.
 3. The 'fire and forget' type missile can achieve a cruising altitude of 100 km and a terminal altitude as low as 10 m to hit the target.
- Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) **1 and 2 only**
(d) 1, 2 and 3
9. The term microlensing is associated with which of the following statements?
- (a) Used in nuclear weapons, a highly specialized shaped explosive charges.
(b) **The light from the background space is bent by the gravitational field.**
(c) It is photo thermal phenomenon, when an excitation laser is focused on non-fluorescent sample.
(d) Distortion of light caused by layers of air having different temperatures
10. Consider the following statements regarding Web 5.0:
1. It gives the user control of their own data and identity by building an extra decentralized web.
 2. From Web 2.0 onwards, it envisions the Internet without the threat of censorship from both governments or big techs.
- Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?
- (a) **1 only**
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2