

## **GS Paper 2**

### **Social Justice**

#### **POCSO Act**

*Syllabus: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes*

#### **In News**

- In a significant development amid multiple cases of alleged sexual abuse and a raging debate on the issue of dignity of women, the central government has said that a victim of sexual abuse faced as a child can register a complaint at any age.
- The Law Ministry concurred with the opinion of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, after examining the overriding provisions of POCSO Act vis-à-vis provisions of CrPC.
- **Section 19 of the POCSO Act**, which deals with sexual crimes against children, lays down the procedure for reporting a crime but **doesn't specify a time limit or statute of limitation for reporting it**.
- Whereas the **CrPC lays down different time limits for crimes which carry a punishment of up to three years**. However, there is no time bar for crimes that would attract a jail term of more than three years.
- Reacting to the development, the Women and Child Development Minister said that now any victim, at any age can complain the sexual abuse faced by them as a child and urged them to come forward and report through the POCSO e-Box.
- **POCSO e-Box is a complaint management system that operates completely online for reporting sexual offences against children**. The e-Box can be accessed through the official website of National Commission for Protection of Child Rights.
- Anyone, a victim or an adult, can file a complaint about a child facing sexual abuse. For small children, the portal offers pictorial aides to make the procedure simple.
- The development assumes significance for child abuse survivors, who more often than not are turned away at police stations or during investigation when they gain the courage to report the matter as adults.

#### **Wage Compensation Scheme For Pregnant Women In Assam**

*Syllabus: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes*

#### **In News**

- Assam has recently launched a **wage compensation scheme for pregnant women** in tea gardens of the state.
- The tea-producing belt of upper Assam, comprising Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Sivasagar and Tinsukia, has one of the country's **worst maternal mortality rates (MMR)** due to anaemia and other diseases, and has been a major cause of worry as the pregnant women labourers in the tea gardens have to work through their pregnancy till the time of delivery.
- The Annual Health Survey of 2012-13 puts MMR at 404 in the tea gardens, whereas the state's average is 301. The national average during 2014-16 was 130.

- The main objective is to provide better health and nutritional supplements to pregnant women, and reduce maternal and neonatal mortality. For this, each woman will get **Rs 12,000** so that she can look after herself and her unborn baby without affecting the livelihood of her family.
- As per the scheme, the first instalment of Rs 2,000 will be provided during the Ante-Natal Check-up (ANC) registration within the first trimester, second instalment of Rs 4000 during the sixth month of the pregnancy, the third instalment of Rs 3000 during delivery at a government-approved health institution and the fourth installment of Rs 3,000 during the sixth week post-delivery.
- They will also not be engaged in work from the third trimester of pregnancy to three months after delivery.
- All temporary, permanent or non-workers living within the tea garden areas will be eligible for the scheme.
- An amount of more than Rs 55 crore has been allotted in the State Health Budget for the financial year 2018-19 for this scheme which will benefit nearly 48,000 pregnant women every year.

### **First Regional Conference on Women in Detention and Access to Justice**

*Syllabus: Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections*

#### **In News**

- The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), Ministry of Home Affairs recently organised the first ever Regional Conference on **Women in Detention and Access to Justice** at Shimla.
- It will be attended by prison officials, representative from Universities/ Institutions, NGOs, health professionals, social workers, counsellors working in the field of correctional administration, and rehabilitation of prisoners.
- The conference is organised with a view to provide a platform for the prison personnel of all ranks at the national level to share their views on various operational as well as administrative issues not only with their counterparts, but also with other experts of national repute in this field and also to identify best practices and standards in the working of correctional administration.

#### **Issues Faced By Women In Prisons**

- Women in prisons face greater hardships than their male counterparts due to many factors such as **social stigma, financial dependence** on their families or husbands. These difficulties are further exacerbated when the woman has children.
- Women have to face numerous problems in prisons owing to **inadequacy of female staff** which often leads to male staff becoming responsible for female inmates, which is undesirable.
- Women are at a most disadvantageous position when it comes to their **reintegration in society after release**. Many are abandoned or harassed post-release, mainly due to the stigma attached with incarceration,
- Further, women tend to **lose ties with their children** over the years, due to inadequate child custody procedures.

- Also, a **robust grievance redressal mechanism** is found to be lacking to tackle cases of sexual harassment, violence and abuse against women in jails.

### **Cabinet Approves Instant Triple Talaq Ordinance**

*Syllabus: Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections*

#### **In News**

- With the **Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2017** stuck in the Rajya Sabha, the Union Cabinet approved an ordinance on to ban instant triple talaq.
- The government explained that the pressing need for an ordinance was the continued practice of this form of talaq despite the Supreme Court judgment.
- The promulgation of the ordinance follows the declaration of instant triple talaq as unconstitutional and invalid by the Supreme Court in 2017 (**Shayara Bano v. Union of India**). The court had held that instant triple talaq given by a Muslim man capriciously and whimsically, without an attempt at reconciliation, was *manifestly arbitrary and violative of Article 14* of the Constitution.

**For provisions and analysis of the Triple Talaq Bill 2017, please refer August 2018 CA Magazine.**

#### **A Note**

- The discriminatory nature of triple talaq is, of course, undeniable, but the government's approach flattens an issue that has more than one dimension.
- There is no evidence to show that the incidence of instant talaq had reached alarming levels to warrant the hasty promulgation of an ordinance.
- The complexity of the triple talaq issue demanded thorough legislative scrutiny. By rushing through with the ordinance, the government has lost the chance to give the law the nuance such a process would have afforded.

### **WHO's First Global Conference On Air Pollution And Health**

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

#### **In News**

- The first Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health was recently held at the World Health Organisation's headquarters in **Geneva**.
- The conference was held in collaboration with UN Environment, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (CCAC) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
- A WHO report titled "**Air Pollution And Child Health: Prescribing Clean Air**", launched on the eve of the conference, examines the heavy toll of both ambient (outside) and household air pollution on the health of the world's children, particularly in low and middle-income countries.

### Report Findings

- More than nine out of 10 people on the planet breath dangerously toxic air, causing some seven million premature deaths each year.
- Around 600,000 children died from acute lower respiratory infections caused by dirty air in 2016.
- Children in poorer countries are far more at risk, with around 98 per cent of all children under five in low- and middle-income countries exposed to PM2.5 levels above WHO air quality guidelines.
- It also reveals when pregnant women are exposed to polluted air, they are more likely to give birth prematurely and have small, low birth-weight children.
- The report compiles evidence on a host of impacts including poor birth outcomes, infant mortality, adverse effects on neurodevelopment, weight issues, respiratory effects and cancers, concluding that air pollution impacts children in 'uniquely damaging ways.'

### Indian Scenario

- Alarmingly, 14 out of the 20 most polluted cities in the world are in India.
- More than two million deaths occur in India prematurely every year, accounting for 25 % of the global deaths due to poor air quality.
- The air pollution related mortality and disease burden India faces is also the highest in the world.
- Most Indian cities, unlike Delhi, do not have an emergency response plan to tackle air pollution.

### Objectives and Outcomes of the Conference

- The conference focussed on presenting evidence, identifying gaps and solutions, and were targeted at practitioners and other technical and political representatives from the health sector and other sectors relevant to the discourse.
- Member states, mayors, heads of Intergovernmental organizations, institutions, and non-state actors launched voluntary commitments, new initiatives, financial support, partnerships and other actions to tackle air pollution while promoting health.
- It called for an acceleration of the switch to clean cooking and heating fuels, and for the promotion of cleaner transportation, lower emissions, and better waste management, among other measures.
- The outcome document included a plan of action and an overall goal to reduce the 7 million deaths per year due to air pollution. These actions will contribute significantly towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 3- Good Health and Well-Being, SDG 7- Affordable and Clean Energy, SDG 11- Sustainable Cities and Communities and SDG 13- Climate Action.

### SC Decision On Use Of Firecrackers

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

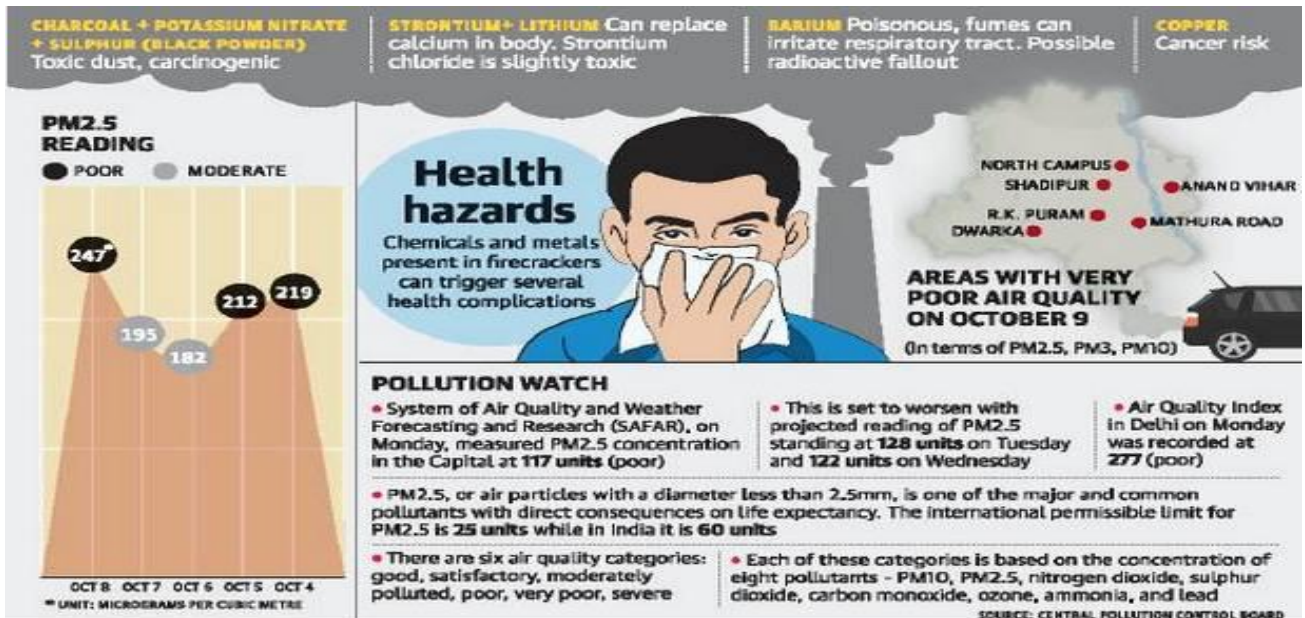
### In News

- The Supreme Court has struck a balance between the interests of the firecracker industry and the right to public health, allowing the manufacture and sale of only green and reduced emission or improved crackers, while banning those that are loud and toxic to man, animal and the environment.
- The ban came on the basis of a petition filed by two infants through their fathers in 2015. They said the air pollution caused by various factors, especially firecrackers, made Delhi a gas chamber. They pleaded for their Right to life.

#### Decision of SC

- **Green crackers:** A Bench of Justices A.K. Sikri and Ashok Bhushan held that only green or improved crackers would be used during religious festivals and other occasions, including weddings through licensed traders.
- **Timing:** The judgment reduced the time for bursting crackers to two hours *i.e.* between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. For Christmas and New Year, the time slot allowed is half-an-hour, between 11.55 p.m. and half past midnight.
- **Online sale:** The judgement also banned online sale through e-commerce websites, including Flipkart and Amazon.
- **Community bursting:** The court urged the Central and State governments to permit community bursting of crackers during festivities in pre-designated areas. In the case of Delhi and the National Capital Region, the court made it mandatory and gave the Centre, the Delhi government, a week's time to identify these pre-designated areas.
- **Not an essential practice of religion:** The Court rejected arguments that bursting crackers was a fundamental right under Article 25 (right to religion) and an **essential practice** during religious festivals like Diwali. The court held that Article 25 is *subject to Article 21* (right to life).
- **Banned the use of certain substances:** Banning the use of *barium salts* in fireworks, the court entrusted the *Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO)* with the job of ensuring that only fireworks with permitted chemicals were sold or purchased during festivities or celebrations; test and check for the presence of banned chemicals like *lithium/arsenic/antimony/lead/mercury*.
- **Punitive action by PESO:** PESO has been empowered to suspend the licences and appropriately dispose of stocks of manufacturers who violated the court's directions.

- **Banned Use of Laris:** The court banned the manufacture, sale and use of joined firecrackers (series crackers or 'laris'), holding that they caused huge air, noise and solid waste problems.



### Final Analysis

- **Implementation issues:** This year there it is a partial ban on use of firecrackers. The SC has done its job, but the two-hour limit won't be implementable on the ground.
- **Livelihood issues:** The industry argued that the revenue from the manufacture and sale of fireworks came to Rs. 6000 crore a year. There is a fear that many worker's livelihoods are at stake as there are many units that are exclusively involved in making sparklers and other light-emitting products.
- **Lack of specific study:** Some have also argued that there was no definite study to show that bursting of crackers worsened the air quality during festivals such as Deepavali.
- **Imposition from above:** the failure of the ban also bares the absence of an adequate groundswell of public opinion against firecrackers. It has to be realized that pollution control is more a matter of individual action rather than legal diktat and coercive controls.

### Way Forward

- The governments must adopt a phased plan to give teeth to the verdict, rather than going for an outright ban on sale of firecrackers, which was attempted with mixed results last year.
- Similarly, last year's ban on sale of firecrackers may have succeeded in ensuring a cleaner Diwali than previous years but cracker bursting was still widely prevalent. However, awareness can play a key role in triggering reform.
- The recent emphasis on scientifically improving firecracker composition holds great promise. The development of **green crackers** with lower emissions and producing water particles that suppress dust and **electronic crackers at CSIR labs** must be adopted by the industry.
- The government also needs to crackdown on **Chinese crackers**, which are cheaper and no less toxic, and have made rapid inroads into market.

- With a phased multipronged plan and public participation, firecracker production, sale and use can be regulated. It is a test of state capacity and individual civic spirit.
- A similar and even stringent approach is required to limit other sources of pollution throughout the year, which includes badly planned and managed mobility and transport sector along with polluting industries and power plants.

### **Swasth Bharat Yatra**

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

#### **In News**

- The government has recently launched a national campaign **Swasth Bharat Yatra**, under which a pan-India cycle rally is being organised to sensitise people about *eating safe food, combat food adulteration, and be healthy* which will compel food businesses to manufacture only those products.
- The campaign has been launched by central government, in association with states, from Oct' 16 on occasion of the World Food Day. The World Food Day is celebrated every year on Oct' **16** in honor of the date of founding of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations in **1945**.
- The **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** is leading this campaign where about 7,500 cyclists are expected to participate in over 18,000 km relay cycle rally to propagate the message **Eat Right India**.
- The volunteer cyclists would stop at 2,000+ locations and conduct in-city and en-route activities and Prabhat Pheris to propagate the message.
- Although the country does not have an issue with availability and affordability of food but there is an issue with the quality and safety of food. Hence the campaign would not only mobilise the masses but also create a large pool of local community to sustain the movement.

### **India Ranked 5th In Pictorial Warning On Tobacco Products**

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

#### **In News**

- India has been ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in terms of the largest pictorial warning on cigarette packs with 85 % of both sides of the packets covered. It shows that the country is making tremendous progress towards creating public awareness on the health hazards of tobacco abuse.
- The Cigarette Package Health Warnings: International Status Report was released recently by the Canadian Cancer Society which documents global progress on plain packaging.
- Canadian Cancer Society is a national, community-based organisation of volunteers whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of people living with cancer.

#### **Report's Findings**

- The report ranks 206 countries and territories on the size of their health warnings on cigarette packages and lists countries and territories that require graphic picture warnings.
- East Timor is ranked first with 85% of the front and 100% of the back of the packaging being used for pictorial warnings. Nepal follows with 90% coverage on both sides.
- The report found that 118 countries and territories have now made picture health warnings on cigarette packages mandatory, up from 100 in 2016. Canada was the first to insist on picture health warnings in 2001.

### **Indian Scenario**

- Indian packaging has the warning on 85% of both sides. Moreover, India is the **only SAARC country** to have a Quit-Line number on tobacco products and the fourth in Asia after Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.
- The current pictorial warnings in India came into effect in April 2016 on the direction of the Rajasthan High Court and, subsequently, the Supreme Court of India.
- In a country like India, where people use several languages and dialects, the pictorial warning transcends the language and in many cases also the illiteracy barrier.
- The 85% pictorial warnings on all cigarettes, bidis and chewing tobacco packages manufactured and sold in India have resulted in 92% of adults (surveyed under GATS 2016-2017) believing that smoking caused serious illness and 96% saying use of smokeless tobacco causes serious illness.
- Moreover, pictorial health warnings on tobacco products are the most cost-effective tool for educating people on the health risks of tobacco use.

### **WHO Guidelines On Sanitation And Health**

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

### **In News**

- World Health Organization (WHO) recently launched its **first global guidelines on sanitation and health**.
- It has developed the new guidelines on sanitation and health because current sanitation programmes are not achieving anticipated health gains and there is a lack of authoritative health-based guidance on sanitation.
- Worldwide, 2.3 billion people lack basic sanitation (with almost half forced to defecate in the open). They are among the 4.5 billion without access to safely managed sanitation services – in other words a toilet connected to a sewer or pit or septic tank that treats human waste.
- Without proper access, millions of people the world over are deprived of the dignity, safety and convenience of a decent toilet.
- Transmission of a host of diseases, including cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery, hepatitis A, typhoid and polio, is linked to dirty water and inadequately treated sewage.
- Further, poor sanitation is also a major factor in transmission of neglected tropical diseases such as intestinal worms, schistosomiasis and trachoma, as well as contributing to malnutrition.



- The world will not reach the goal of universal sanitation coverage – where every person in the world has access to toilets – by 2030 unless countries make comprehensive policy shifts and invest more funds.
- By adopting the new guidelines, countries can significantly reduce the 8,29,000 diarrhoeal deaths due to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene.
- For every US \$1 invested in sanitation, WHO estimates a nearly six-fold return as measured by lower health costs, increased productivity and fewer premature deaths.
- The guidelines go on to state that sanitation interventions should ensure entire communities have access to toilets; the full sanitation system should undergo local health risk assessments to protect individuals and communities from exposure resulting from unsafe toilets.
- Sanitation should be integrated into regular local Government-led planning to avert higher costs associated with retro-fitting sanitation and to ensure sustainability.
- The health sector should invest more and play a coordinating role in sanitation planning to protect public health.
- Sanitation is a fundamental foundation of human health and development and underpins the core mission of WHO and ministries of health worldwide. The guidelines will go a long way in securing health and wellbeing for everyone, everywhere.

### **Swachh Survekshan Grameen Awards 2018**

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

#### **In News**

- The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation had commissioned “Swachh Survekshan Grameen-2018” (SSG 2018) through an independent survey agency to develop ranking of all districts of India on the basis of quantitative and qualitative sanitation parameters.
- In all, 6786 villages in 685 Districts across India were covered. The ranking was done based on surveys of public places like schools, Anganwadis, PHCs, haat/ bazaars, Panchayat and citizen’s perception of Swachhata and their recommendations for improvement of the program and data from the SBM-G MIS.
- Awards for Swachh Survekshan Grameen (SSG) 2018 were recently conferred at the concluding session of Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention.
- **Overall Ranking:**
  - **Top 3 States**-1) Haryana, 2) Gujarat 3) Maharashtra
  - **Top 3 Districts** 1) Satara, Maharashtra 2) Rewari, Haryana 3) Pedapalli, Telangana
  - **States with maximum citizen participation** 1) Uttar Pradesh 2) Gujarat 3) Maharashtra
  - **Districts with maximum citizens’ participation** 1) Nashik, Maharashtra 2) Solapur, Maharashtra 3) Chittorgarh, Rajasthan
- SSG 2018 turned out to be massive mass mobilisation exercise with communities in each village undertaking special drives to improve the general cleanliness in their villages and Gram Panchayats investing funds from their local area development fund to augment the sanitation situation in public places.

### **IIT Bombay Tops in QS Rankings**

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

#### **In News**

- The **Indian Institute of Technology Bombay has emerged on top** in the first-ever standalone prestigious Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rankings (a British company specialising in education) for Indian institutions of higher education.
- The India University Rankings is the second country-specific rankings done by QS, after it released one for China on October 10. The table reflects country's top 75 institutions.
- Seven out of the top ten positions were occupied by IITs in these rankings as IIT Madras, IIT Delhi and IIT Kharagpur bagged the third, fourth and fifth slots respectively. IISc bagged the second spot on the list.

#### **Global Rankings**

- The QS world rank list released has ranked 1011 institutes in 85 countries.
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is the world's best university as per the list.
- In the World University rank list, IIT Bombay has been placed 162 rank followed by the foremost research institute of India IISc at 170.
- Explaining the variance in performance of Indian institutions in the domestic and international tables, QS informed that the ranking criteria for both was different.
- Institutions have been scored on academic reputation (30 %), employer reputation (20 %), faculty-student ratio (20 %), proportion of staff with PhD (10 %), papers per faculty from Scopus database (10 %), citations per paper from Scopus database (5 %), proportion of international students (2.5 %) and proportion of international faculty (2.5 %).

### **IMPRESS and SPARC**

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

#### **In News**

The Union HRD Minister recently launched web portals of two schemes IMPRESS and SPARC, with an aim to build a research ecosystem in educational institutions.

#### **IMPRESS Scheme**

- The objective of **Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)** is to identify and fund research proposals in social sciences with maximum impact on the governance and society.
- It will provide an opportunity for social science researchers in any institution in the country which includes all universities (central and state) and also a few private institutions meeting the requirement.
- The **Indian Council of Social Science and Research (ICSSR)** will be the project implementing agency and it will be implemented at a total cost of Rs. 414 crore till March, 2021.

- Under the Scheme, **1500 research projects will be awarded for 2 years** to support the social science research in higher educational institutions and to enable research to guide policy making.
- Research in social science is essential for progress of the society and the research carried out under IMPRESS scheme will be used to understand and solve problems facing the society.

### **SPARC**

- The **Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)** aims at building the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian and foreign institutions.
- **IIT-Khargapur** is the national coordinating institute to implement the SPARC programme.
- Under this Scheme, **600 joint research proposals will be awarded for 2 years** to facilitate strong research collaboration between Indian research groups with the best in class faculty and renowned research groups in the leading universities of the world, in areas that are at the cutting edge of science or with direct social relevance to the mankind, specifically India.
- A set of **5 Thrust Areas** (Fundamental Research, Emergent Areas of Impact, Convergence, Action-Oriented Research and Innovation-Driven) and sub-theme areas in each thrust area has been identified for collaboration under SPARC based on emergent relevance and importance for the nation.
- This Scheme is expected to have a major impact in providing the best international expertise to address major national problems, expose Indian academicians to the best collaborators abroad, enable international faculty to stay in India for a longer duration, provide Indian students an opportunity to work in the world class laboratories, to develop strong bilateral relationships in research and improve the international ranking of Indian Institutes.
- The research work under both the schemes would start from January next year.

### **Human Capital Index**

*Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

### **In News**

- The World Bank has released a Human Capital Index (HCI) as part of the **World Development Report (WDR) 2019**. Broader theme of WDR this year is “**The Changing Nature of Work**”.
- As part of this report, the World Bank has launched a Human Capital Project (HCP). The HCP programme is claimed to be a program of advocacy, measurement, and analytical work to raise awareness and increase demand for interventions to build human capital.
- There are three components of HCP-
  - a cross-country human capital measurement metric called the Human Capital Index (HCI),
  - a programme of measurement and research to inform policy action, and
  - a programme of support for country strategies to accelerate investment in human capital.

- This index measures the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18, given the risks of poor health and poor education that prevail in the country where he/she was born.
- According to the World Bank, Human capital consists of the knowledge, skills, and health that people accumulate over their lives, enabling them to realize their potential as productive members of society.
- The aim is to spur governments to invest more in people – increasing their budget allocations to health and education and stepping up the interventions made in these sectors.
- The HCI has three components:
  - **Survival:** A measure of whether children survive from birth to school age (age five)
  - **Education:** A measure of expected years of quality-adjusted school, which combines information on the quantity and quality of education
  - **Health:** Two broad measures of health—the rate of stunting for children under 5 and adult survival rates.

#### **Comparison with Human Development Index (HDI)**

- UNDP constructs Human Development Index (HDI) while World Bank releases HCI.
- The HCI uses **survival rates and stunting rate instead of life expectancy** as measure of health, and **quality-adjusted learning instead of merely years of schooling** as measure of education.
- HCI also excludes per capita income whereas the HDI uses it.
- Two significant changes from HDI are exclusion of income component and introduction of quality adjustment in learning.

#### **Indian Performance**

- India is ranked **115 among 157 countries** and is placed lower than its Asian peers viz. Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Bangladesh.
- A child born in India today will be **only 44 % as productive** when he/she grows up if he/she enjoyed complete education and full health.
- The HCI in India for females is marginally better than that for males.
- **Probability of Survival to Age 5:** 96 out of 100 children born in India survive to age 5.
- **Expected Years of School:** In India, a child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 10.2 years of school by her 18th birthday.
- **Harmonized Test Scores:** Students in India score 355 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment.
- **Learning-adjusted Years of School:** Factoring in what children actually learn, expected years of school is only 5.8 years.
- **Adult Survival Rate:** Across India, 83 per cent of 15-year olds will survive until age 60.
- **Healthy Growth (Not Stunted Rate):** 62 out of 100 children are not stunted. 38 out of 100 children are stunted, and so at risk of cognitive and physical limitations that can last a lifetime.

#### **Global Metrics**

- The HCI measures the Index outcomes for each country as a fraction of maximum value of 1.

- For 56% of the world's population, the HCI is at or below 0.50; and for 92% it is at or below 0.75. Hence only 8% of the population can expect to be 75% as productive as they could be .
- **Singapore was ranked number one** in the world followed by followed by South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and Finland.
- The advanced economies such as North America and Europe mostly have HCI value of above 0.75, while South Asia and Sub Saharan Africa have the lowest HCI among the regions.

#### **Why India Rejected This Report**

- There are serious reservations about the advisability and utility of this exercise of constructing HCI.
- There are major *methodological weaknesses, besides substantial data gaps*. For instance, for the schooling parameter, though quantity is assessed using enrolment rates reported by UNESCO, quality is gauged using harmonized test scores from major international student achievement testing programs.
- Due to lack of availability of an authoritative and uniform test score, about 9 different test scores and systems using varying methodology have been claimed to have been harmonized by the World Bank.
- None of the 9 systems cover more than 100 countries, with some have very limited regional coverage. This makes the methodology quite complex and non-uniform.
- As most nations have country-wide assessments of elementary education, which could have been used, this is not a reasonable approach.
- For India, the data for quality of education **pertains to 2009 assessment by PISA**, which was conducted for only two states, namely Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The methodology for harmonization is hugely suspect, the data quite dated and consequently the results quite non comparable.
- Adult survival rates, stunting, and under 5 mortality are outcome indicators will change at a relatively slow rate as compared to process indicators used in computing for example the Ease of Doing Business. As a result, none can really be excited about setting out the programme of Index improvement.
- Several key factors, on the other hand, seem to have been neglected. As against the variability of outcomes for similar levels on investment, it would be more useful to developing countries if the Index focused on enabling them to measure and improve the cost-effectiveness of their spending on health and education.

Also, the differences in development outcomes arising from governance issues, political systems, socio-cultural context, and legacy issues have been totally ignored.