

GS PAPER 2

Social Justice-NOV'18

Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities 2018

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

In News

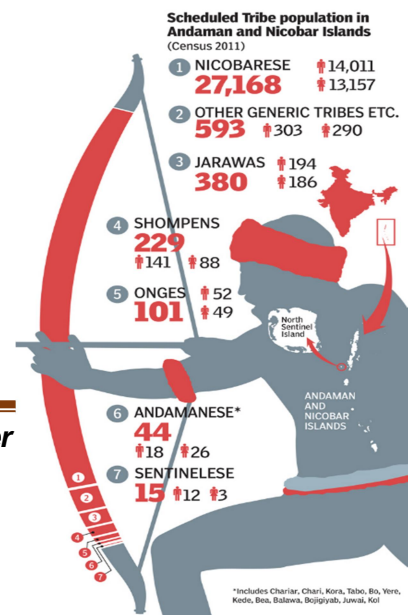
- The Global IT Challenge (GITC) for Youth with Disabilities 2018 was recently held in India.
- The three-day event, held every year in Asia Pacific region, was organised by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** in association with Rehabilitation International Korea and their associated partner LG Electronics.
- Around 100 youth with disabilities (visual disability, hearing disability, locomotor disability and intellectual disability/developmental disorder) from 18 countries participated in the event.
- It is a capacity building project that **helps youth with disabilities to overcome their limitations and challenge themselves for a better future** by providing them with access to ICT and related experiences, improving their ability to leverage information and social participation while setting ICT agendas for participant countries related to disabilities and boosting international cooperation and exchange.
- It is being held with a total of four events including e-Tool Challenge to evaluate the skills of using the MS Office programme and e-Life Map Challenge to evaluate the online information search ability in specific situations.
- Holding of GITC annually has certainly made an impact on promoting the use of ICT among the youth with disabilities. Moreover, it can also help to reduce digital divide and expand social integration of persons with disabilities across communities and countries by creating an accessible global information network.
- India has always been in the forefront of software development in the world. However, there is a need to create deeper and wider awareness about the application of ICT at the grass root level for empowering the person with disabilities.

Andamans: Tribals And No-Go Areas

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

In News

- The Sentinelese have again rejected external contact when an American John Allen Chau, who went to North Sentinel Island to preach Christianity, was killed by the them. Similarly, in 2006, two fishermen went harvesting crabs illegally off North Sentinel Island and did not return.
- The Allen Chau incident also symbolizes the surveillance challenges that continue to bedevil the Indian security establishment. Given India's long coastline and maritime expanse



that includes the far-flung island territories (Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands), ensuring 24/7 zero-error surveillance is a complex challenge.

- The Sentinelese are a pre-Neolithic people who have inhabited **North Sentinel Island** for an estimated 55,000 years without contact with the outside world. They are short statured, possibly due to the island effect that causes genetic limitation over time.
- They hunt and gather in the forest, fish in the coastal waters and are animistic in faith. Unlike the neighbouring Jarawa tribe, they make boats which can only be used in shallow waters.
- Their extreme isolation makes them **very vulnerable to diseases to which they have no immunity**. A large chunk of the population of the 10 Great Andamanese tribes was wiped out after the indigenous peoples caught syphilis, measles, and influenza on an epidemic scale following contact with the early settlers.

Legal Regulations

- Jawaharlal Nehru's **Tribal Panchsheel** were the guiding principles after Independence to formulate policies for the indigenous communities of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **International Conventions:** International policy has changed over the decades. While the Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention 1957, of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) insisted on an integrationist approach towards tribal communities, the 1989 Convention insisted on a policy of non-intervention, "recognizing the aspirations of these peoples to exercise control over their own institutions, ways of life and economic development." *India ratified the 1957 convention, but has not ratified the 1989 convention.* However, despite not signing it, India tried to tread the path of non-interference.
- **Protection Granted To Tribes:** The Sentinelese and other aboriginal tribes of the archipelago are protected under The Andaman and Nicobar (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956. This Regulation protected the tribals from outside interference, specified the limits of reserved areas and said no land in a reserved area shall be allotted for agricultural purposes or sold or mortgaged to outsiders. Those violating the land rights of the tribals were to be imprisoned for one year, fined Rs. 1,000 or both. Despite this, there continued to be constant interactions between the tribals and settlers/ outsiders.
- **1963 Order:** Under the Foreigners (Restricted Areas) Order, 1963, the Andaman & Nicobar Islands are a "Restricted Area" in which foreigners with a *restricted area permit (RAP)* can stay on 13 islands and make day visits to another 11.
- **Buffer Zone:** The Sentinelese have remained hostile from the time efforts began to reach out to them in 1967. The government gave up in the mid-1990s, and in order to safeguard their health and sovereignty, decided that no one could enter a 5 km buffer zone around their island, which was already out of bounds.
- **Change of Policy:** In December 2014, the A&N administration announced a change of policy from "hands off" to "hands off but eyes on" to protect the Sentinelese.
- **Relaxation from RAP:** In recent years, the Andaman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Andaman Association of Tour Operators have pressed to have the RAP restrictions relaxed. Therefore, in August 2018, the Home Ministry dropped the RAP requirement for visiting 29 inhabited islands until 2022, even though separate approval continue to be

required for visiting Reserve Forests, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Tribal Reserves. Following criticism that the move compromised the safety of the tribes and ecology of the islands, the UT Administration clarified in October 2018 that Indian nationals would continue to require a pass issued by the Deputy Commissioner for entering a tribal reserve, and foreigners would need prior approval from the Principal Secretary (Tribal Welfare).

Need To Leave Them Alone /Cost Of Outside Exposure On Tribals

- **Reduced Immunity:** Many millennia of living in isolation and in far smaller numbers have denied them exposure and immunity to most infectious diseases that other human societies encountered. And it could be the collective memory of exploitation or epidemics after contact with outsiders that makes the Sentinelese hostile.
- **Negative Consequences:** From 2004 onward, the 400-odd surviving Jarawa began to retreat into the forest, closing the window of their willing interaction with the world. But the highway that passes through their inhabited land continues to bring the world and sexual exploitation, substance abuse and disease into their shrinking sanctuary.
- **Possible Land Encroachment:** The commercialization of tribal spaces could lead to encroachment of land, as we see in other parts of the country.
- **Dwindling Number And Loss Of Knowledge Of Local Customs:** Fewer than 50 Great Andamanese are alive today. In 2010, Boa, the last of the Bo, a Great Andamanese tribe, died taking with her the knowledge and language of her people. A few months earlier, another ancient language, Khora, had passed with Boa's neighbour Boro.
- **Rising Dependence:** In December 2008, at least 15 Onge men died after drinking from a plastic container that had washed up on Dugong Creek. The Onge, who now number fewer than 100 have abandoned hunting gathering and depend entirely on government help.
- **Home Ministry's Stand (counter-view):** While the Home ministry maintains that its doing away with restricted area permits for foreigners to visit North Sentinel Island had nothing to do with the killing of Chau, as he had flouted stricter restrictions under the *Protection of Aboriginal Tribes (Protection) Law and the Indian Forests Act* and also failed to report his stay in Andamans to the local FRRO. So, it would have made no difference even if RAP had been in place. The Ministry also conveyed to National Commission for ST (NCST) that while 44 violations of rules and regulations by foreign visitors to Andaman & Nicobar were reported in the recent past, not one related to RAP regime. It also recalls that two people were killed in a similar way in 2016 when RAP restrictions were in place.

Way Forward

- Considering the significance of the indigenous tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the government needs to reorient its priorities towards protecting them from outside influence. India **needs to sign the 1989 convention of the ILO** and implement its various policies to protect the rights of the indigenous population.
- Chau's tragedy underlines the need to re-examine security and tighten vigil around North Sentinel Island. The policies of "protection" demand strong surveillance infrastructures, empowered staff and coordination among police, forest and welfare agencies. It should also make efforts to sensitize settlers and outsiders about them. That Chau was helped in his journey shows a lack of understanding about the Sentinelese. Only concrete efforts can prevent such an incident from happening again.

- Moreover, the Home Ministry's recent decision to include North Sentinel Island among 29 islands that will not require a restricted area permit, purportedly to boost tourism, was uncalled for. And it must consider reimposing restrictions (on ground that it would endanger primitive tribes occupying nearly 10 of the 29 islands) that require foreigners to obtain special permits to visit protected islands in Andaman & Nicobar housing, un-contacted, aboriginal tribes. (NCST has also demanded reimposition of RAP)
- Similarly, post 26/11, there have been attempts to enhance the capability of the Indian Coast Guard and the maritime police clusters among coastal states. While these initiatives are welcome, the larger and more intractable challenge is the reform of India's intelligence apparatus.

Lexicon For Tribal Languages In Odisha

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

In News

- In what is seen as a significant step to keep vanishing tribal languages in circulation, the Odisha government has come out with lexicons of 21 such languages.
- The bilingual tribal dictionaries will be used in multilingual education (MLE), initiated by the State government, at the elementary level in tribal-dominated districts.
- The bilingual tribal dictionaries for MLE and trilingual tribal language proficiency modules in all the 21 tribal languages have been formulated by the Special Development Council. Both will help in enhancing proficiency in tribal languages.
- **Odisha has** a unique place on the tribal map of India for having the **maximum number of Scheduled Tribe communities**. The State is home to 62 different tribal communities, including 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).
- These tribes speak 21 languages and 74 dialects. Of the 21 tribal languages, seven have their own scripts. However, Odia is used as the medium of communication in the dictionaries.
- Adoption of more widely spoken competitors, such as Odia, Hindi, English and dominant tribal languages, has hastened the disappearance of rare dialects. Preparation of the dictionaries is a small step towards ensuring that they are preserved and promoted.
- Going forward, it will not only help students and researchers but will also go a long way in bringing government functionaries closer to tribal communities.

International Day For the Elimination of Violence against Women

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

In News

- The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women was celebrated worldwide on November 25.

- This year's theme is **Orange the World: #HearMeToo**, and as in previous years, the colour orange is used to represent a brighter future, free from violence against women and girls as a unifying theme running through its global activities, while the hashtag is encouraged to amplify the message of survivors and activists and to put them at the centre of the conversation and response.
- It also includes **16 Days of Activism** against gender-based violence which is an international initiative that takes place each year. It commences on November 25, and continues till the International Day of Human Rights on December 10.

Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

- Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread, persistent, and devastating human rights violations in our world today and remains largely unreported due to the impunity, silence, stigma and shame surrounding it.
- Despite the adoption of **CEDAW** by the UN General Assembly in 1979, violence against women and girls remains a pervasive problem worldwide.
- The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, issued by the UN General Assembly in 1993, defines violence against women as *"any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."*
- The adverse psychological, sexual and reproductive health consequences of violence faced by women affects them at all stages of their life.
- It continues to be an obstacle to achieving equality, development, peace as well as to the fulfillment of women and girls' human rights. The promise of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to leave no one behind cannot be fulfilled without putting an end to this violence.

Alarming Figures

- 1 in 3 women and girls experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, most frequently by an intimate partner.
- Only 52% of women married or in a union freely make their own decisions about sexual relations, contraceptive use and health care.
- Worldwide, almost 750 million women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday, while 200 million women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation.
- 1 in 2 women killed worldwide were killed by their partners or family in 2012, while only 1 out of 20 men were killed under similar circumstances.
- 71% of all human trafficking victims worldwide are women and girls, and 3 out of 4 of these women and girls are sexually exploited.
- Violence against women is as serious a cause of death and incapacity among women of reproductive age as cancer, and a greater cause of ill health than traffic accidents and malaria combined.

SHe BOX Linked to All Ministries

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

In News

- The Ministry of Women and Child Development has linked SHe-Box, the online portal to report complaints of Sexual Harassment at Workplace, to all the Central Ministries, Departments and 653 districts across 33 States/Union Territories.
- She-Box is a comprehensive online complaint Management System for women working in both public and private organizations to lodge complaints of sexual harassment at workplace.
- With the linking of the portal to central and state governments, once a complaint is submitted to the portal, it will be directly sent to the section of the employer concerned.
- Those who have already filed a written complaint with the concerned Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) or Local Complaint Committee (LCC) constituted under the Sexual Harassment Act are also eligible to file their complaint through this portal.
- Meanwhile, the government has also empanelled 223 institutions and organisations to conduct awareness exercises on the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 in the wake of a large number of women coming out to name their harassers under the **#MeToo campaign**.
- These empanelled institutes have to submit quarterly reports. They have so far organised over 700 capacity-building exercises which were attended by nearly 50,000 participants.

Pneumonia and Diarrhea Progress Report 2018

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

In News

- The **Pneumonia and Diarrhea Progress Report 2018** was recently released ahead of the 10th Annual World Pneumonia Day, on November 12, by the International Vaccine Access Center (IVAC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
- It describes efforts to fight pneumonia and diarrhea in **15 Countries that account for 70%** of global pneumonia and diarrhea deaths in children under five.
- Globally, **pneumonia and diarrhea together led to nearly one of every four deaths** that occurred in children under five years of age in 2016.
- It analyzes how effectively countries are delivering or ensuring the use of 10 key interventions, which include exclusive breastfeeding, vaccination, access to care and use of antibiotics, oral rehydration solution, and zinc supplementation to help prevent and treat pneumonia and diarrhea.
- These measures are known to help protect children from death due to these illnesses and could help achieve the **UN's Sustainable Development Goal target of reducing under-five mortality to 25 per 1,000 live births by 2030**.

The Report

- Eight out of 15 countries assessed failed to meet the targets for any of 10 interventions to protect against and treat pneumonia and diarrhea.
- Although countries are making progress towards improved vaccine coverage, they seriously lag in efforts to treat childhood illnesses, especially among populations that are remote, impoverished, or otherwise left behind.
- Progress to stop child deaths is being hampered by persistent inequities in countries around the world.
- **Indian scenario**
 - Despite improvements in full immunisation coverage across India, girls under the age of five in rural and poorer urban localities continue to lose out on vaccinations.
 - In India, the under-five child mortality for girls is 40 deaths per 1,000 live births, while for boys it is 39 deaths per 1,000 live births. A total of 2,60,990 children, under the age of five, died of pneumonia and diarrhoea in India in 2016 – the highest in the world.

Way Ahead

Addressing these inequities will demand greater levels of funding, **strong political commitment, accountability supported by better data, and a coordinated global effort that prioritizes the most vulnerable**. Further, integrating strategies related to health systems, poverty, and education will also yield opportunities to improve equity in these countries.

Air Pollution Problem

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

In News

- **Context:** Steadily deteriorating air quality in the Capital New Delhi.
- The World Health Organization's ***Air Pollution and Child Health: Prescribing Clean Air*** report has been released.
- It is the general notion that India's air problem is mainly due to urban problem. However, the report underlines the fact that this is not so. As it notes, "the main sources of air pollution may vary from urban to rural areas, but no area is, strictly speaking, safer."

Major Findings And Challenges

- The report found **India had almost 61,000 deaths of children under five years** due to ambient and household pollution. This is the most deaths globally in this age bracket.
- For other children who are exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution in India—which is 98% or so of them—the issue links to a number of long-term physical and mental developmental problems.
- It is also connected with the country's shifting epidemiological profile, feeding into the rise of non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular conditions and cancer.
- And contrary to popular perception, **this is as much or more a rural issue**; of the 1.1 million air pollution-related deaths in 2015, **75% were in rural India**.

Rural or Urban ?

- There is, unfortunately, insufficient data and research here. In 2003, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) issued guidelines for ambient air quality monitoring.
- They differentiated between the types of pollution affecting urban and rural areas. When it comes to the latter, the guidelines focus entirely on indoor air pollution. The use of biomass fuels for indoor cooking, heating and light is a significant problem.
- However, every winter, the Indo-Gangetic plains, housing nearly a third of India's population, are blanketed with a thick layer of ambient pollution. Stubble burning, brick kilns, coal-fired factories and woodfires for heat all contribute.
- The **problem is that** of the 600-plus air quality monitoring stations the CPCB set up across the country, there are none in rural areas.

Draft National Clean Air Programme

- The programme aims to expand the monitoring network to include 50 rural areas with at least one monitoring station each.
- Most crucially, the programme does not envisage any cooperation and coordination across crucial ministries such as health, transport and energy.
- In effect, what should have been the first comprehensive framework for addressing ambient air pollution across the country seems to have little more in mind than the first step in the process—data collection.
- The scenario is, likewise, complicated when it comes to indoor pollution in rural India. The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, aimed at shifting poor households from biomass to clean liquified petroleum gas (LPG), had the right idea.
- But it hasn't quite worked out that way in practice. LPG costs are a major deterrent to adoption and that even in households where LPG is used, fuel stacking—using biomass fuels alongside LPG—is common.

Where To Focus

New Delhi's status as national capital ensures that it will receive plenty of attention every year come winter. Rural India in the north of the country—the heart of the problem—is not as fortunate. That must change to make a serious dent in the economic and health burden of air pollution.

Choked By Smog: On Air Pollution

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

In News

Air pollution is choking several cities in the northern States once again, as changes in temperature and slowing winds trap soot, dust and fine particulate matter.

The Issue

- The National Capital Region is badly hit, as the burning of agricultural residue in Punjab and Haryana is releasing large volumes of smoke containing, among other pollutants, highly damaging fine particulates, or PM2.5.

- **The problem is aggravated by the burning of urban waste, diesel soot, vehicular exhaust, road and construction dust, and power generation.**
- Although India has nine of the 10 most polluted cities in the world, it has not taken consistent action on pollution.
- Tens of millions live with ambient air quality that is well short of even the relaxed parameters the country has set for fine particulates, compared with those of the World Health Organization.
- **The UN Environment Programme's recent report titled 'Air Pollution in Asia and the Pacific: Science-Based Solutions'** has sounded a warning, pointing out that only 8% of the population in the countries of the region get to breathe air of acceptable quality.
- One study of degradation of Delhi's air over a 10-year period beginning 2000 estimated premature mortality to have risen by as much as 60%.
- Farm stubble burning is a major contributor to the problem, and its footprint may be growing because of wider use of mechanical harvesters that is producing more waste.

What Can Be Done To Tackle The Situation

- The Centre and the State governments need to get into crisis mode to dramatically reduce emissions. They must address the burning of carbon, which is a direct source, and emissions with oxides of nitrogen and sulphur from vehicles that turn into fine particulates through atmospheric reactions.
- An innovative approach could be to use climate change funds to turn farm residues into a resource, using technological options such as converting them into biofuels and fertilizers.
- From an urban development perspective, large cities should reorient their investments to prioritise public transport, favouring electric mobility.
- Governments should make the use of personal vehicles in cities less attractive through strict road pricing mechanism. Sharply escalated, deterrent parking fees can be implemented.
- If governments delay action on the critical issue of pollution control, public pressure must force them to act.

Delhi Air Pollution

- Although less than previous year, farmers of Punjab and Haryana continue to burn stubble despite a court order and the visible consequences it has on Delhi's air quality.
- Thanks to the promotion of farm machinery backed by financial assistance by government and awareness programmes, there is a visible reduction in the volume of post-harvest stubble-burning in Punjab and Haryana this year.
- But still, a significant chunk of farmers continue to burn the stubble, even after they understand how it contributes to Delhi's air pollution.

Why Farmers Aren't Giving Up Stubble Burning?

- Happy Seeder, which precludes the need for stubble burning, fails to persuade the farmers in not burning stubble. There are two reasons for this, which are enough to override the fear of penal action on stubble burning and ignoring the consequences it has on capital's air quality:
 - Fear of lower yields

- High cost of farm machines
- Many farmers in these states take land on lease -- by paying up to Rs 60,000 per acre -- which leaves them with small leeway to think about the Happy Seeder, as they assume lower yields translate into huge losses for them.
- However, the fear of a lower output has no factual or legitimate basis, say experts in the field, even as they feel all farmers would adopt new techniques in due course of time.

What is Happy Seeder?

Conceived by the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) in 2007-08, Happy Seeder allows sowing without removing stubble. It is seen as a perfect alternative to the problem as it completely rules out the possibility of straw burning.

Why Doesn't Everyone Use It?

- The Happy Seeder machine is expensive at Rs 1.5 lakhs. Despite the 50 per cent subsidy, the amount of Rs 75,000 is still huge for farmers, especially for those who take land on lease.
- Although they can hire the machine for Rs 1,500 per acre from Custom Hiring Centres (CHC), it is hard to get them during wheat sowing period because there are not enough machines available.

Monogenic Diabetes

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

In News

- A National Monogenic Diabetes Study Group has been formed to identify cases of monogenic diabetes across the country.
- Supported by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF), and Dr. Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre (DMDSC) will be the national coordinating centre for the study group.
- Monogenic diabetes is a group of disorders where **mutation of a single gene causes diabetes**, the three commonest forms being - Maturity Onset Diabetes of the Young (MODY), Neonatal Diabetes Mellitus (NDM) and Congenital Hypoglycaemia,
- It is usually passed on in an autosomal dominant gene (a sex independent gene that's inherited from one of the parents). This means only one copy of the mutation is needed to develop diabetes. There is usually a strong family history of diabetes and in multiple generations. Diagnosis, therefore, involves genetic testing for these diabetes-causing gene mutations that disrupt insulin production.
- Patients are also usually antibody negative. Once treatment for the diabetes begins, the antibodies usually resolve.
- In addition to blood sugar issues, some of the forms of Monogenic diabetes involve metabolic issues such as - Growth problems, Impaired glycogen storage in the liver, Impaired fatty acid metabolism, and Exocrine pancreatic insufficiency

ICMR Guidelines for Antibiotic Use

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

In News

- To ensure judicious use of antibiotics in healthcare facilities, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has released **Antimicrobial Stewardship Guidelines** to advise hospitals in setting up Antimicrobial Stewardship Programmes (AMSP) for the purpose.
- Recognising the importance of setting up AMSP structures in healthcare institutions, ICMR has initiated AMSP activities by developing AMSP curriculum, conducting workshops, and developing AMSP research projects
- These guidelines provide guidance for setting up structure and processes of Antimicrobial Stewardship Programmes in healthcare institutions. It will help discuss essential elements of antimicrobial stewardship, diagnostic stewardship besides providing information on tools that can be used to measure progress.
- Hospital-based programmes dedicated to improving antibiotic use have been helpful in improving the quality of patient care and safety through increased infection cure rates, reducing treatment failures, and increasing the frequency of correct prescription for therapy and prophylaxis

About AMR

- Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a major public health challenge and with very few new antibiotics in the pipeline, it is important to use the existing drugs judiciously.
- Irrational prescription of broad-spectrum antibiotics, poor regulations around sale of antibiotics, self-medication, lack of education and awareness regarding responsible use of antibiotics have been identified as some of the key factors driving antimicrobial resistance in the country.
- The **National Health Policy, 2017** also terms antimicrobial resistance as one of the key healthcare issues and prioritises development of guidelines regarding antibiotic use, *limiting over-the-counter use of antibiotics and restricting the use of antibiotics as growth promoters in livestock.*

Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2018

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

In News

The Union Cabinet recently approved the A&HP Bill, 2018 that aims to regulate and standardize education and services by allied and healthcare professionals.

Current Ecosystem

- The current system is highly focused on efforts towards strengthening limited categories of professionals such as doctors, nurses and frontline workers like ASHAs and ANMs.

However, in the current state of healthcare system, there also exist many A&HPs who remain unidentified, unregulated and underutilised.

- A&HPs constitute an important element of the health resource network. Public healthcare experts claim that skilled and efficient A&HPs in any healthcare system can reduce the cost of care and dramatically improve the accessibility to quality driven healthcare services.
- Globally, A&HPs typically attend undergraduate degree programme of a minimum of three to four years to begin with and may attain up to PhD level qualification in their respective streams. However, currently most Indian institutions offering such courses lack standardisation.
- Majority of the countries worldwide have a statutory licensing or regulatory body that is authorised to license and certify the qualifications and competence of such professionals, particularly those involved in direct patient care (such as physiotherapist, nutritionist) or those whose occupation impact patient care directly (such as lab technologists).
- Though such professionals have existed in the Indian healthcare system for many decades, a considerable gap in the allied and healthcare space is because of a lack of a comprehensive regulatory framework and absence of standards for education and training of A&HPs.

Provisions Of The Bill

- The Bill provides for setting up of an Allied and Healthcare Council of India and corresponding State Councils which will set the standards and play the role of a facilitator for A&HPs.
- The Bill provides for structure, constitution, composition and functions of the Central Council and State Councils. The councils will be framing policies and set standards for regulation of professional conduct, creation and maintenance of live registers, and provisions for common entry and exit examinations.
- The Central Council will comprise 47 members, of which 14 members shall be ex-officio representing diverse and related roles and functions and remaining 33 shall be non-ex-officio members who mainly represent the 15 professional categories.
- An Interim Council will be constituted within 6 months of passing of the Act holding charge for a period of two years until the establishment of the Central Council.
- The Bill empowers the central and state governments to make rules. Moreover, central government also has the power to issue directions to the Council, to make regulations and to add or amend the schedule.
- The Councils are to be established as a body corporate with a provision to receive funds from various sources.
- Councils will also be supported by central and state governments respectively through grant-in-aid as needed. However, if the state government expresses inability, the central government may release some grant for initial years to the State Council.
- Professional Advisory Bodies under Central and State Councils will examine issues in detail and provide recommendations relating to specific recognized categories.
- The bill will also have an overriding effect on any other existing law for any of the covered professions.

- Offences and penalties clause have also been included in the bill to check mal-practices.

Benefits

- The legislation will bring all existing A&HPs on board within a few years from the date of establishment of the Council.
- It provides an opportunity to create qualified, highly skilled and competent jobs in healthcare by enabling professionalism of the allied and healthcare workforce.
- It lays ground work for high quality, multi-disciplinary care in line with the vision of Ayushman Bharat, moving away from a doctor led model to a care accessible and team based model.
- The step can help country to cater to the global demand of healthcare workforce which is projected to be about 15 million by the year 2030, as per WHO Global Workforce Report 2030.
- It is estimated that the Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill, 2018 will directly benefit around 8-9 lakh existing A&HPs in the country and several other graduating professionals joining the workforce annually.
- However, since this Bill is directed to strengthen the healthcare delivery system at large, the entire population of the country and the health sector as a whole will be benefited by the Bill.

World Toilet Day

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

In News

- Recently World Toilet Day was celebrated on **19th November** across the world. It was established by the World Toilet Organization in 2001. Twelve years later, the UN General Assembly declared World Toilet Day an official UN day in 2013.
- The theme for this year is '**When Nature Calls**'. It implies when nature calls, we need a toilet, but billions of people don't have one. This means human faeces, on a massive scale are not being captured or treated – turning the environment into an open sewer.
- **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6** aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of sanitation and water for all by 2030. World Toilet Day exists to inform, engage and inspire people to take action toward achieving this goal.
- Today, 4.5 billion people live without safely managed sanitation and **892 million people still practise open defecation**.
- The impact of exposure to human faeces on this scale has a devastating impact upon public health, living conditions, nutrition, education and economic productivity across the world

Statistics

- **20% of schools worldwide do not provide any toilet facilities** - a particular problem for girls during menstruation.
- **900 million schoolchildren across the world have no hand washing facilities** – a critical barrier in the spread of deadly diseases.

- Globally, 80% of the wastewater generated by society flows back into the ecosystem without being treated or reused.

Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP)

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

In News

- Ministry of Human Resource Development recently launched the Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP) in New Delhi.
- LEAP is a three weeks flagship **leadership development training programme** (2 weeks domestic and 1 week foreign training) for second level academic functionaries in public funded higher education institutions.
- The main objective is to **prepare second tier academic heads** who are potentially likely to assume leadership roles in the future.
- The programme would provide senior faculty with high academic credentials the required leadership and managerial skills including skills of problem-solving, handling stress, team building work, conflict management, developing communication skills, understanding and coping with the complexity and challenges of governance in HEIs, financial & general administration.
- It will fulfill the critical need of **combining the qualities of a good teacher and an effective leader** which will make higher education institutions perform their roles of developing better students who will be torch bearers of the future.
- The implementation of the programme will be through **15 NIRF top ranked Indian Institutions** and the foreign Universities identified for the training are within the top 100 in the world global rankings.

Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching (ARPIT)

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

In News

- Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched the ARPIT.
- It is a unique initiative for **online professional development** of 15 lakh higher education faculty using the MOOCs platform **SWAYAM**.
- For implementing ARPIT, 75 discipline-specific institutions have been identified and notified as National Resource Centres (NRCs) in the first phase.
- The NRCs are tasked to prepare online training material with focus on latest developments in the discipline, new & emerging trends, pedagogical improvements and methodologies for transacting revised curriculum.
- The courses is a 40-hour module with 20 hours of video content and 20 hours of non-video content, covering a diverse range of topics.

- It will be an ongoing exercise so that every year NRCs will continuously develop new refresher module in their earmarked discipline each year.
- It aims to revolutionize professional development of faculty by catering to massive numbers by leveraging ICT and online technology platform of SWAYAM.

Institution's Innovation Council

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

In News

- Union HRD ministry recently launched the Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) program under Innovation cell of MHRD to systematically foster a culture of Innovation in all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the country.
- It is a significant step in institutionalising innovation & developing a scientific temperament in the country.
- The purpose of formation of network of Institution's Innovation Councils (IICs) is to encourage, inspire, and nurture young students by exposing them to new ideas and processes resulting in innovative activities in their formative years.
- Universities are the main research centres of developed countries and because of their research they are at the top in global innovation ranking. The setting up of IICs would also help the country in improving its ranking in the innovation space.
- More than 1000 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have already formed IICs in their campuses and enrolled for the IIC network to develop an innovative eco-system in their campuses.

Apart from IIC, Innovation Cell has undertaken many initiatives in this direction such as implementing programs like Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievement (ARIIA), Smart India Hackathon (SIH)- 2019 etc to contribute to the holistic development of education in the country.