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Ayan Jain, AIR-16

I want to thank Kalam IAS for their support in CSE 2023. I was a part of the interview guidance course where I found the current affairs material to be extremely good, and I have also benefited previously from the value addition material provided by Kalam IAS for Mains

Thank you!

.....

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CSE 2024 TOPPERS TESTIMONIAL

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Abhishek Vashishtha
AIR-14, CSE 2024

I am Abhishek Vashishtha, I have secured AIR 14 in CSE 2024. Kalam IAS played an important role in my UPSC journey. I practiced PYQs at Kalam IAS, which helped me understand the exam pattern and improved my answer writing skill.

The face to face evaluation of my answers was very helpful. Interview Video analysis by Ajendra Chaudhary Sir was very useful. The detailed feedback provided to me by him helped me a lot.

Thank you Kalam IAS for being a constant support during my journey.

Abhishek

Abhishek Vashishtha
UPSC CSE Rank 14.



TANMAY
AIR-346, 2024

Hello,
Kalam IAS Team
I am writing this testimony to express my sincere thanks to whole team. Especially mock analysis of interview video was helpful. Daily discussion with Ankit Sir was also helpful. Once again thank you for your efforts in my interview preparation.
Tanmay,
AIR-346,
UPSC CSE 2024



Kanisk Singh
AIR 380, 2024

I am Kanisk, I cleared UPSC CSE 2024 with AIR 380 (Roll No-300000000). My first step was Kalam IAS Academy from where I attempted UPSC CSE first before UPSC 2024. I already believe that the first step is always a great step in my clearing UPSC CSE 2024. My journey of UPSC preparation is as follows:
1) Excellent coverage of General Affairs - UPSC Prelims questions prepared with UPSC PYQs.
2) Quality and depth of content - Static syllabus was covered by very carefully crafted questions.
3) Specialized Mock Interview - Not only was the content of the topic covered but also the format of the topic was highly suitable as future questions are more related to it.
4) Detailed Interview Preparation - My interview preparation was extremely high level as I was given a lot of time to prepare for my interview as well.
Thank you Kalam IAS for my UPSC CSE 2024 preparation.



Video Testimonials <https://bit.ly/4jGiyRJ>

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Dear Students,

We are elated to present you the fourth edition of Kalam **Mains Marks Improvement Booklet (MIB) 2025**. It contains **examples, quotes, anecdotes, references from the movies & books, poems, case studies** among others to enrich your mains answer writing.

Moreover, given the **elaborate coverage of data/facts/ committee recommendations etc.** in each other GS MIBs, we have not included them everywhere to prevent the repetition. We **recommend you go through Separate MIBs** for the comprehensive coverage.

Best Wishes!

Team KALAM

Dear Aspirants

Less than **50 days** are left for CSE MAINS 2025. We strongly recommend each one of you to:

1. **GIVE TEST ANYWHERE and GET FACE 2 FACE Evaluation** by UPSC topper here. Flexibility of getting **second opinion** on your answers by selected candidate.

2. **Marks Improvement Booklets MIB (8)** are first of its kind booklet for CSE MAINS that is highly endorsed by toppers and coveted by all the aspirants at any stage of the preparation. It enhances your Marks by at least **20+ Marks** and helps to get your name in the CSE Merit list.

3. **REPLAY IAS Mains 2025** – write exam on the day of Exam - Each CSE aspirant who **missed mains** MUST write REPLAY - which gives opportunity to gauge their preparation; intensity of competitiveness in Mains and psychological advantage of knowing the mental and physical tiredness of the mains exam.

APPEAL to all Selected/Senior/ Mains giver to encourage your Friend/candidate/ward to write this one program. **YOU KNOW THE IMPORTANCE**. Don't let them give excuses "abhi prepare nai hai" Good Luck!

List of Marks Improvement Booklets

- **Ethics Marks Improvement Booklet**
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- **Environment & Disaster Management Marks Improvement Booklet**
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Face to Face Mentors (Mains 2025)



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Abhishek Vashishtha
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AIR 228

Devansh M. Dwivedi
PSIR



AIR 386

Tanishi Kalra
ECONOMY



AIR 393

SARTHAK SINGH
PSIR



AIR 543

MANISH KUMAR
ANTHROPOLOGY

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1

ISSUES RELATED TO WOMEN

1.1 DOWRY SYSTEM IN INDIA:

- 1) **DEFINITION:** Dowry is defined under Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. It has been defined as any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given directly or indirectly by one party to a marriage to the other party.
- 2) **FACTS:**
 - a) AS per **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report 2022**, as many as 13,479 cases were registered in 2022 under the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. **6,450 dowry deaths were registered in 2022.**
 - b) Some tribal communities in India: **Baria, Pagi, Damor of Gujarat and Yanadis of Andhra** customarily pay bride price.
 - c) **According to (NCRB) reports**, on an average, **every hour a woman succumbs to dowry death** in India with the annual figure rising upwards of 7000.
 - d) **Dowry deaths accounted for 40% to 50% homicides in the country** for almost a decade from 1999 to 2018.
- 3) **LEGAL PROVISIONS:**
 - a) **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961**- To prohibit giving or taking of dowry.
 - b) **Section 80 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023** contains provisions related to 'Dowry Death'.
 - c) **Section 304B (relates to Dowry Death) of IPC** is read in conjunction **with Section 113B** (on Presumption of Dowry death) of Indian Evidence Act, 1872 in case of a dowry death.
 - d) **Article 15(1)** - No citizen shall be discriminated only on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. But there are special considerations for women and children, SC/ST, OBC.
 - e) **Article 15(3)** - The state has the authority to provide particular accommodations for women and children.
 - f) **Article 39(a)** - Free Legal aid is providing assistance to the people who are unable to afford legal representation and access to the court system.

1.2 WOMEN'S POLITICAL STATUS IN INDIA:

- 1) **FACTS:**
 - a) The representation of women MPs in Lok Sabha has slowly **improved from 5% in the 1st Lok Sabha to 14 % in the 17th Lok Sabha. 18th Lok Sabha have 74 women MPs (13.6%).**
 - i) Rwanda (61%), UK (32%), Nepal (29.9%), USA (24%), Pakistan (20.7%) and Bangladesh (20.3%) and have higher representations of women in their Parliament.
 - b) **Only 7 women ministers out of 71 ministers constituting 9.8%** in the Indian Parliament in 2024, against the **international average of approx. 22%.**
 - c) **India ranks in the bottom quarter, 148th out of 193 UN member nations**, in the proportion of elected women representatives in Parliament according to Inter- Parliamentary Union (IPU).
 - d) **Thiruvananthapuram Declaration 2022** ignites the long-pending Women's Reservation Act (since 1996) for 33% reservation for women in Lok Sabha and State Legislatures.
- 2) **Constitutional provisions for women's political empowerment:**
 - a) **Article 15 (3):** the State is empowered to make "**special provisions**", legislative or otherwise, to secure women's socio-political advancement.
 - b) **Article 325:** Guarantees equal rights for both sexes, and entitles women to enjoy economic, social, cultural, and political rights on an equal footing with men.
 - c) **Article 243D & 243T:** Reservation of 1/3rd Seats for women in PRI and Urban Local Bodies.

d) **International agreements:**

- i) **The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**, Ratified by India in 1993, it provides appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full advancement of women and to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country.
- ii) **The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), 1995** endorses affirmative action for women in the political spheres for the **achievement of democratic transformation, women's empowerment and achieving the goals of sustainable development.**

The declining sex ratio has been a cause of worry for Independent India. The past two decades have seen positive signs with the ratio slightly **improving to 943 per 1,000 men in 2011 census from 933 in the 2001 census.**

The proportion of women exceeded men in 2021 for the first time in history.

For every 1,000 men, there are 1,020 women, according to the Centre's **National Family Health Survey (NFHS)** data.

1.3 GENDER VIOLENCE:

- 1) **SHADOW PANDEMIC: UN Women** has called upon the member-states to include prevention of violence against women in their action plans on COVID-19, calling the rise in gender-based violence a "shadow pandemic".
- 2) **FACTS:**
 - a) **Nearly one in three women** worldwide **experience physical or sexual violence** during their lifetime. (**World Health Organization**)
 - b) **According to NCRB report 2023**, crime against women in 2022, translating to **approximately 51 FIRs every hour.**
 - c) NCRB data shows an **increasing trend of cases of trafficking** such as these increased by almost 4% **as compared to the previous year.**
- 3) **LEGISLATIONS: Article 15 (3)** gives power to the legislature to make special provision for women and children. There are **three laws** in India that deal directly with domestic violence:
 - a) The **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005**- to provide for **more effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the Constitution** who are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family.
 - b) The **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961**- aims to **prohibit the giving or taking of dowry.**
 - c) **Section 85 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023** makes provisions related to domestic violence against women
- 4) **Complaint could be filed against any person** who is, or has been, in a domestic relationship with aggrieved woman.
 - a) Supreme Court in **2016** in **Hiral P Harsora and ors Vs. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora & Ors Case** has struck down the words "adult male" before the word "person".
 - i) **Relatives of husband or male partner.**
 - ii) **Includes both male and female relatives** of male partner.
- 5) **MARITAL RAPE:**
 - a) Non-Criminalization of marital rape in India emanates from **Exception 2 to Section 375 of IPC.** The clause **63 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)** retains the marital rape exception.
 - b) Unfortunately, **India does not recognize** marital rape as an offence.
 - c) **International experience:** According to **Amnesty International** data, **77 out of 185 (42%) countries criminalise marital rape** through legislation. In other countries, it is either not mentioned or is explicitly excluded from rape laws, both of which can lead to sexual violence.

- d) The **United Nations** has urged countries to end marital rape by closing legal loopholes, saying that “the home is one of the most dangerous places for women”.
- e) **Kerala HC's landmark judgment 2021**: Marital rape grounds to claim divorce.
- f) **Nimeshbhai Bharatbhai Desai vs State of Gujarat, 2017**: A husband cannot violate his wife's dignity by coercing her to engage in a sexual act without her full and free consent.
- 6) **INITIATIVES AT CENTRAL LEVEL**:
 - a) **The MoW&CD - One Stop Centres (OSCs), Universalisation of Women Help Line (WHL), Ujjawala Homes, SwadharGreh, Emergency Response Support System (112)**
 - b) **National Commission for Women (NCW)**: NCW has also launched a WhatsApp number 7217735372 for reporting domestic violence cases.
 - c) **The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** in collaboration with “NIMHANS” has started a helpline 080 – 46110007 to provide psychological support to victims of domestic violence.
 - d) **The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** has issued an advisory to all private satellite TV channels and FM Radio channels to give adequate publicity to women helpline number 1091 and 181.
- 7) **INITIATIVES AT STATE LEVEL**:
 - a) A community radio program in **Uttar Pradesh**, for raising awareness about violence against women, “**Bell Bajao!**” (Ring the Bell) campaign, calls on men and boys to take a stand against domestic violence.
 - b) “**Mpower 1on1**” is a newly launched helpline in **Mumbai** to report domestic abuse.
 - c) **Public servants in Uttar Pradesh will have to declare that they have received no dowry when they were married.** (Recent circular of Department of Women's Welfare)
- 8) **INITIATIVE AT NGO LEVEL**: NGOs like **Stree Mukti Sanghatan** are helping women via free counselling and use the online facility for reporting the crime.

CARE ECONOMY:

- 1) **The International Labour Organisation (ILO): CARE WORK** as consisting of activities and relations involved in meeting the physical, psychological and emotional needs of adults and children, old and young, frail and able-bodied.
- 2) **INCLUDES**: university professors, doctors and dentists at one end of the spectrum, to childcare workers and personal care workers at the other. Care workers also include domestic workers.
- 3) Since demand for care work all over the world is set to surge by 2030 (due to demographic transition and urbanisation), **investment in India's care economy can possibly produce 11 million jobs in India (of which 32.5% will be by women).** (ILO REPORT)
- 4) **Women's Budget Group (2019)**: The Indian health and care sector could create 11 million more jobs, with over a third of them going to women, with an additional 2% of the GDP invested in it.
- 5) **OECD report - Women's unpaid work is valued at 3.1% of GDP in India.**
- 6) **More than 80 percent of Indian men believe** taking care of the child is the primary responsibility of the mother.
- 7) **Supreme Court** ruled that the **denial of Childcare Leave (CCL) to a government employee in Himachal Pradesh** as a **violation of working women's constitutional rights.**
- 8) **Beijing Platform for Action in 1995** - advocated for recognising and valuing women's roles in caregiving, domestic work, and volunteerism.
- 9) **41 per cent of females aged 15-59 years participated in caregiving** for their household members, while male participation in such caregiving was almost half at 21.4 per cent.

1.4 UNPAID WORK:

- 1) **DEFINITION:** Unpaid work refers to the production of goods or services that are consumed by those within or outside a household, but not for sale in the market (OECD 2011). An activity is considered “work” (vs. “leisure”) if a third person could be paid to do a certain activity (OECD 2011).
- 2) **FACTS:**
 - a) As per **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** -
 - i) **Around 83.9 per cent females participated in unpaid activities during a day in 2024, almost the same as the level of 84.0 per cent in 2019.**
 - ii) **Females also spent 62 more minutes in a day in unpaid caregiving activities for household members than males, with the average time spent by females registering an increase to 137 minutes in 2024 from 134 minutes in 2019.**
 - b) **McKinsey estimates** that women do **75%** of the world’s total unpaid care work.
- 3) **UNPAID CARE SERVICES CAN BENEFIT ECONOMY:**
 - a) SBI Report - **Unpaid work in India contributes approximately ₹22.7 lakh crore or about 7.5% of the country's GDP.**
 - b) **ILO estimates** that if unpaid care services were to be valued on the basis of an hourly minimum wage, they would amount to **9 per cent of global GDP (US\$11 trillion).**

1.5 FEMINISATION OF AGRICULTURE:

- 1) **DEFINITION:** Feminization of agriculture – It refers to increasing of concentration of women in agriculture sector.
 - a) According to **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS July 2021-June 2022)** - 57.3% of the women aged 15-59 who were working were working in agriculture in 2021-22.
 - b) As per **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) July, 2023 – June, 2024 - Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** for female of age 15 years above has increased from 37.0% during July 2022 – June 2023 to **41.7% during July 2023 – June 2024.**
 - c) **Agriculture accounted for almost all of the increase in the workforce.** (Phenomenon is called **feminisation of agriculture**)
- 2) **FACTS:**
 - a) **Agriculture sector employs 80% of all economically active women;** they comprise 33% of the agricultural labour force and 48% of self-employed farmers.
 - b) More than 70% of rural women are engaged in agricultural work. Yet, **only 13.9% of women own land holdings. (2017-18 NSSO data)**
 - c) **NFHS-5 data** estimates that **among women aged 15 to 49, 38.7 percent own a house or land (either jointly or by themselves).**
 - d) **Close to 90% of women-owned landholdings is of small and marginal landholdings** (Agri-census 2015-16).
 - e) **Wages received** by women were, on an average, **35.8% lower** than wages received by men for the period 1998-2015 (Labour Bureau).
 - f) While **men earn 82 per cent of the labour income in India, women earn only 18 per cent of it,** according to the **World Inequality Report 2022.**
- 3) **INITIATIVES:**
 - a) **Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP),** a subcomponent of the **Deendayal Antodaya Yojana-NRLM (DAY-NRLM)** seeks to improve the present status of women in Agriculture.

- b) Under Agriculture policies there are provisions of **issuing Kisan Credit Card to women**
- c) The **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** has declared **15th October** of every year as **Women Farmer's Day**.
- 4) **ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY:** For organizing agrarian women into collectives, educating them about their rights, giving them sustainable livelihood training, etc.
 - a) **E.g., Deccan Development Society in Telangana, or Musahar Manch Uttar Pradesh.**

1.6 WOMEN IN STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MEDICINE):

1) STATUS IN INDIA:

- a) According to **The Equality Equation: Advancing the Participation of Women and Girls in STEM**, a World Bank report - In India, **43% of STEM graduates are women as compared to 35% of the global average**.
 - i) However, **only 18.7% of researchers in India are women** as compared to 30% of the global average.
(Participation declines at post-doctoral level)
- b) The **bulk of the 11% of colleges in India that are only open to women** offer studies in the **arts and business** rather than science.
- c) **Only 15% of faculty positions** in science in India are occupied by women.
- d) According to the **Key Global Workforce Insights**, **nearly 81 per cent of Indian women in STEM faced gender bias in performance evaluations** and a large proportion felt that their companies **would not offer those top positions**.
- e) **SDG-5:** Includes on achieving gender equality and **empowering women and girls:** Ending gender identity-based discrimination, violence (in all its forms) and harmful practices.
- f) **76 per cent of Indian women** working in STEM believe that their **male co-workers have a genetic advantage** over them in mathematics and science.

2) INITIATIVES:

- a) **Boeing Sukanya Program** – aims to provide opportunities for girls and women from across India to learn critical skills in STEM fields and train for jobs in the aviation sector.
- b) The **Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA)** launched a new initiative Women in Engineering, Science, and Technology (**WEST**) to promote women in STEM: **new I-STEM initiative**.
 - i) **I-STEM: initiative of PSA** under the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (**PM-STIAC**) **mission: national web portal** for sharing research equipment/facilities and for promoting collaborations in R&D and technological innovation in academia and industry.
- c) The Department of Science & Technology (**DST**) and **IBM India** announced two collaborations to promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) learning among students.
 - i) **'Vigyan Jyoti' program:** This programme aims to inspire girls from grades 9 to 12 to pursue STEM in their higher education.
 - ii) **'Engage with Science':** It is a technology-driven interactivity platform for connecting the high school students to the higher education institutions to be developed by the Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous organisation of DST.
 - iii) **Knowledge Involvement Research Advancement through Nurturing (KIRAN).**
 - iv) **Biotechnology Career Advancement and Reorientation Programme (BioCARE):** By Department of Biotechnology for Career Development of employed/unemployed women Scientists for whom it will be the first extramural research grant.
 - v) **Women Scientist Scheme'** — provides career opportunities to unemployed women scientists and technologists, especially those who had a break in their career.

RIGHT TO MARRY

Right to marry is **not expressly recognized** either as a fundamental or constitutional right under the Indian Constitution.

1) Facts:

- As per **National Family Health Survey 5 (NFHS 2019-21) (NFHS -5)**, The share of women aged 20-24 who married before turning 18 has declined from 27% to **23% in the last five years**.
- In general, the **age for marriage for girls have been increasing**. Women who were married before 18 was 47% in NFHS-3 and **declined to around 27%** in NFHS-4.
- According to government data from 2019, the **average age to marry for women is 22.1 years**.

2) Supreme Court's judgements on Right to Marry:

- Shakti Vahini vs. Union of India (2018)**: Supreme Court held that the right of a person's choice to marry whomever they please are in an inherent part of individual dignity and intrinsic to **Article 21**. It also declared '**khap panchayats**' as '**illegal**' and that no assembly can interfere in marriage.

3) ARTICLE 16 OF UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS- Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race/nationality/religion, have the right to marry and to find a family.

4) COMMITTEES:

- The **18th Law Commission report (2008)** asked for uniformity in the age of marriage at 18 years for both men and women and lowering the age of consent to 16 years, a recommendation of the **Justice Verma Committee** also.
- Jaya Jaitley Task Force, 2020** – It has recommended to increase the Minimum Age of marriage for girls to 21 years. The same should be increased in a gradual manner.

5) Regarding Same Sex Marriage – Supreme Court Judgement 2023–

- Special Marriage Act (SMA), 1954, does not apply to same-sex couples.**
- There is **no fundamental right to marry under the Indian Constitution**.
- SC upholds the right of same-sex couples to **enjoy equal benefits and rights similar to those of live-in partners, as guaranteed under Article 21 (Right to Life)**.

1.7 MATERNITY AND PATERNITY LEAVE:

- Maternity leave- The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017** allows for pregnant women to take leave for a **total of 26 weeks** for the **first two children** out of which up to 8 weeks can be claimed before delivery.
 - For adoptive mothers**, the leave entitlement is of **12 weeks**.
 - 12 weeks** maternity leave for children **beyond first two**.
- Paternity leave** given by BCCI to the Indian captain- All India and Central Civil Services Rules allow Central government employees with less than two surviving children 15 days of paternity leave, whereas South Korea gives the highest paternity leaves, of 53 days. **There are no provisions of Paternity leave in Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017.**
- Paternity leave is defined under the **Central Civil Services (Leave) Rule 551(A) – Central government** Male employees with fewer than two surviving children are entitled to 15 days of paid paternity leave.
- State Government Variations in Paternity leave: Tamil Nadu – 15 days, Kerala – 10 days, Karnataka and Sikkim – Provides leaves for adoptive fathers or single male parents.**
- Suo-Moto Action:** Several private companies, too, offer paternity leave, without the prodding of legislation. For example, **Zomato rolled out 26 weeks of paid paternity leave for employees who become new fathers.**

- 6) **International Scenario:** In Britain, Sweden and Norway, parents are granted about a year of paid parental leave to tend to their newborns during that particularly crucial and difficult period.
- 7) **UNICEF** had the provision of **4 weeks paid paternity leaves** to its male employees but now it has been extended to sixteen weeks across all its offices worldwide.

1.8 ABORTION AND SURROGACY:

1) ABORTION:

- a) **Abortion is illegal under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**, unless it is performed in a manner prescribed under **Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971**.
 - i) **Section 88** - Punishes anyone who voluntarily causes a woman to miscarry, with **3 to 7 year of punishment and/or fine**.
 - ii) **Section 89** - Punishes anyone who causes a miscarriage without the woman's consent with **10 years to lifetime imprisonment and/or a fine**.
 - iii) **Section 90** - Addresses the situation where a person's actions intended to cause a miscarriage result in the woman's death.
 - iv) **Section 92** - Punishes anyone who causes the death of a quick unborn child through actions that would be considered culpable homicide with an imprisonment up to **10 years and/or fine**.
- b) **2021: Act was amended to make the MTP more accessible to women.**
- c) **SC ruling (2022):** For sole purpose of MTP Act, the meaning of rape must include marital rape.
- d) Further, **SC also extended the right to safe and legal abortion up to 24 weeks** to unmarried and single women.
- e) According to Centre for Reproductive Rights, **more than 60 countries have liberalized their abortion laws** over past 30 years.

2) SURROGACY:

- a) **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare notifies Surrogacy (Regulation) Amendment Rules, 2024. Surrogacy with donor eggs or sperm is now allowed in India, but with conditions:**
 - i) At least **one partner must provide their own egg or sperm** (not both from donors) in case of medical condition.
 - ii) This is a **recent change**, as using donor gametes was previously banned.
- b) **Single women (widow or divorcee)** undergoing surrogacy must use **self-eggs and donor sperms** to avail surrogacy procedure.
- c) **Only altruistic surrogacy is allowed and penalises commercial surrogacy.**
- d) **Number of attempts** of any surrogacy procedure on surrogate mother **shall not be more than 3 times**.
- e) A surrogate mother may be allowed for abortion during surrogacy in accordance with **MTP Act, 1971**.
- f) **Abortion of surrogate child** requires **written consent of surrogate mother** and **authorization** of appropriate authority.

1.9 WOMEN IN WORKFORCE

FACTS:

- 1) The **Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR)** in India has witnessed an increase to **41.7%**, but still much behind the males (78.8%) -- **Periodic Labour Force Survey released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) (July 2023 to June 2024)**.
 - a) It is way below the global FLFPR of approximately **51.07%** in 2023.

- b) In India's rural areas, the Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) saw a significant increase, rising from 24.6% in 2017-18 to 47.6% in 2023-24, as per latest FLFPR.
 - i) Increase in the share of unpaid family workers and own-account workers engaged in subsistence agricultural activities among rural female workers.
- c) Urban areas also witnessed a marginal increase in the FLFPR, from 25.4% in 2022-23 to almost 28.0% in 2023-24.
- 2) Women's decision-making power in the household is more if they are employed- **National Family Health Survey (NFHS)**
- 3) As per the **World Bank**, at **17% of GDP**, the economic contribution of Indian women is less than half the global average.
- 4) If women's participation in the economy was raised to that of men, then **India's GDP can grow by 27%** - International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- 5) If India achieved gender equality, there would be an **increment to annual GDP growth by 1.4 per cent.** (McKinsey report)
- 6) **India ranks 121 out of 131 countries on female LFPR. (International Labour Organisation).**
- 7) **India's female labour force participation (FLFP) rate is the lowest among the BRICS countries.**
 - a) Lower than some of its neighbours in South Asia such as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- 8) **As of December 2022**, the percentage of women serving in the different branches of the Indian armed forces are as follows: **Indian Air Force: 13.09% Indian Navy: 6% Indian Army: 3.80%. Women comprise 10% of the Russian Armed Forces and 16% of US.**
- 9) India's growth rate would be **10% higher** if women were working. (World Bank).
- 10) **GENDER PAY PARITY:**
 - a) **CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES:**
 - i) **ARTICLE 16:** Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.
 - ii) **ARTICLE 38(2):** The State shall strive to minimize the inequalities in income, and endeavor to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities.
 - iii) **ARTICLE 39(d):** Equal pay for equal work for both men and women.
 - b) **FINDINGS:**
 - i) In India, men earn 82 per cent of the labour income whereas women earn 18 per cent of it. (**World Inequality Report 2022**).
 - ii) **India dropped to 129th place in the World Economic Forum's (WEF), Global Gender Gap Index 2024.**
 - c) **INITIATIVES:**
 - i) The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced a "pay equity policy" for its contracted women cricketers in the country.
 - ii) The Supreme Court had an all-woman bench which was only the third time in its history.
 - d) **LEGISLATIONS:**
 - i) Minimum wages Act, 1948
 - ii) Equal Remuneration act, 1976
 - iii) Code on Wages, 2019 (No discrimination on ground of sex)
 - iv) MGNREGA, 2005
 - v) Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017

11) Government has taken various steps to improve women's participation in the labour force and quality of their employment:

- a) Enhancement in **paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks.**
- b) Provision for **mandatory creche facility** in the establishments having 50 or more employees.
- c) **Permitting women workers in the night shifts** with adequate safety measures, etc.
- d) **Providing skills through Women's Industrial Training Institutes.**
- e) **Nirbhaya Fund**- dedicated non-lapsable fund for implementation of initiatives aimed at enhancing the safety and security for women in the country.
- f) **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 or POSH Act 2013 completed 10 years.**
 - i) It was enacted to make workplaces safer for women by preventing, prohibiting, and redressing acts of sexual harassment against them in workplace.

1.10 CONSTITUTIONAL PRIVILEGES FOR WOMEN:

- 1) Equality before law for women (**Article 14**)
- 2) The State not to discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them (**Article 15 (i)**)
- 3) The State to make any special provision in favour of women and children (**Article 15 (3)**).
- 4) Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State (**Article 16**).
- 5) The State to direct its policy towards securing for men and women equally the right to an adequate means of livelihood (**Article 39(a)**); and equal pay for equal work for both men and women (**Article 39(d)**).
- 6) To promote justice, on a basis of equal opportunity and to provide free legal aid by suitable legislation or scheme or in any other way to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities (**Article 39 A**).
- 7) The State to make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief (**Article 42**).
- 8) The State to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (**Article 46**).
- 9) The State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people (**Article 47**).
- 10) To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India and to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women (**Article 51 A (e)**).
- 11) Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat to be reserved for women and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat (**Article 243 D (3)**).
- 12) Not less than one- third of the total number of offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level to be reserved for women (**Article 243 D (4)**).
- 13) Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality to be reserved for women and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality (**Article 243 T (3)**).
- 14) Reservation of offices of Chairpersons in Municipalities for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and women in such manner as the legislature of a State may by law provide (**Article 243 T (4)**).

2

ISSUES RELATED TO CHILDREN

2.1 CHILD LABOUR:

- 1) According to ILO, 'Child labour' is often defined as work that **deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.** It refers to work that is:
 - a) **Interferes with their schooling** by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.
- 2) **CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS:**
 - a) **Article 21A: Right to Education**
 - b) **Article 24: Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.**
 - c) **Article 39: The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner.**
- 3) **FACTS:**
 - a) **Globally, 1 in 10** children worldwide engaged in child labour.
 - b) In India, as per **Census 2011**, the number of child labourers is around **10 million**.
 - c) **An analysis (2016) by CRY (Child Rights and You)** of census data shows that the **overall decrease in child labour is only 2.2%** per year from 2001 to 2011.
 - d) As per **PLFS 2018-19 - between 1.8 and 3.3 million children aged 5-17** are engaged in **child labor**, representing **0.7% to 1.3%** of all children in that age group.
 - e) According to **UNICEF report 2020 –**
 - i) The **agriculture sector accounts for 70 per cent of children in child labour** (112 million) followed by 20 per cent in services (31.4 million) and 10 per cent in industry (16.5 million).
 - ii) **Nearly 28 Percent of child in age 5-11 and 35 percent in age 12 to 14 in child labour are out of school.**
 - iii) **Around 72% of child labour takes place within the family unit**, primarily on family farms or in small family enterprises.
 - f) UNICEF - without accelerated efforts, the region is likely to have 33.4 million children in child labour in 2025.
 - g) **Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh** constitute **nearly 55%** of total working children in India.
 - h) The prevalence of child labour in **rural areas is close to 3 times higher** than in urban areas. The **agriculture sector** accounts for more child labourers, followed by services and industry.
 - i) An RTI report found that **95% of the amount in the child labour rehabilitation welfare fund** over the last 10 years is lying unutilised.
- 4) **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:**
 - a) **Committees:**
 - i) **Gurupadswamy Committee, 1979:** It was formed to study the issue of child labour and recommended a multipronged approach in dealing with the problems of working children. **It recommended for Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986.**
 - ii) **Child Labour Technical Advisory Committee, 2017** - advises on **hazardous occupations.**
 - iii) **Central Monitoring Committee** - monitors the **National Child Labour Project.**
 - b) **Legislations/ initiatives:**
 - i) **The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986:**

- ii) **National Policy on Child Labour 1987**
- iii) **Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act 2016.**
- iv) **Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Rules, 2017.**
- v) **National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme:** A central sector scheme to rehabilitate child labour.
- vi) **PENCIL Portal** – A separate online portal Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCIL) to ensure effective enforcement of provisions of Child Labour Act and smooth implementation of National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme.

5) Non-Government Initiatives:

- a) **Bachpan Bachao Andolan (Save the Childhood Movement), founded by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi,** has helped liberate more than 1 Lakh children in India from exploitation through education and rehabilitation.
 - b) **Save the Children** - runs programs like **"Education on Wheels"** that provide mobile learning centres in remote areas.
 - c) **Child Rights International (CRI)** - uses street plays, interactive workshops, and local media campaigns to educate communities about child labor and children's rights.
 - d) **CRY (Child Rights and You)** - offers ongoing support to rescued children through bridge courses to mainstream education, life skills training, and mentorship programs.
- 6) **International convention:** India **ratified ILO Convention 182** on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and **Convention 138** on the Minimum Age of Employment.

2.2 CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION:

1) NFHS-5 FINDINGS:

- a) **Stunting: 38.4% of children under the age of five years** i.e. **One in every 3** children is stunted **India has the second highest number of stunted children in South Asia** (at 38%).
- b) **Malnourishment: One in every 3** children is malnourished.
- c) **Wasting: 17%** of children under the age of five years.
- d) **Underweight: 19.7%** under the age of five years.
- e) **Overweight: 4%** of children under the age of five years.
- f) **Exclusive breastfeeding** among infants 0-5 months of age: **58%**

2) FINDING OF OTHER REPORTS:

- a) **According to a UNICEF report, India has world's highest number of children** with severe acute malnutrition.
- b) **In Global Hunger Index (2024), India ranks 105th out of the 127 countries.**
- c) India loses up to **4% of its Gross Domestic Product** and **8% of its productivity** due to child malnutrition.

3) INITIATIVES:

- a) **POSHAN ABHIYAN:**
 - i) It targets to reduce Stunting, undernutrition, Anemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively.
- b) The **'Paalan 1000 campaign- Journey of the First 1000 Days'**, focuses on the cognitive developments of children in the first 2 years of its life.
- c) **The National Food Security Act 2013** assures food and nutrition security to the vulnerable and critical age groups.
- d) **National Nutrition Strategy (NITI Aayog):** to reduce all forms of malnutrition by 2030.
- e) **Integrated child development scheme (ICDS)**

- f) **Global Action Plan aims to achieve the SDG targets on child wasting** (reducing proportion of children suffering from wasting to <5% by 2025 and <3% by 2030).
- 4) **BEST PRACTICES AT STATE LEVEL: Andhra Pradesh:** 82% of children are beneficiaries of MDM. It provides eggs/bananas to children twice a week using the state's own resources.
- 5) **Report findings about under-utilization of funds-** The 2020 **Comptroller and Auditor General of India audit of ICDS** revealed that out of the approximately **Rs 4,300 crore released** under POSHAN Abhiyaan from March 2018 to December 2019, **only around 1,570 crores had been spent (around 1/3rd)**.

2.3 CHILD MARRIAGE:

1) FACTS:

- a) **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** estimates:
- India is **home to the largest number of child brides** in the world - accounting for a **third of the global total**.
 - Nearly **16 per cent adolescent girls aged 15-19 are currently married**.
 - Child marriage is **more prevalent in rural areas** (48 per cent) than in urban areas (29 per cent).
- b) Marriage systems and practices vary by region, caste and tribe. **Rates of child marriage are higher in the North-West and lower in the South-East of the country.**
- c) **National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5):** Every fourth woman surveyed in the age group of 20 to 24 was married before they turned 18.
- An overall declining trend of early marriage** in both the sexes has been observed.
 - India's current child marriage rate stands at 23.3 percent**, with 257 districts experiencing child marriages at rates higher than the national average.
- d) According to the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** data of **2022**, there has been a marginal decline in cases of **child marriage in 2022 compared to the previous year**, as it was **1002 cases in 2022 and 1050 in 2021**.

2) INITIATIVES:

- a) **LEGISLATIONS:**
- The **Special Marriage Act, 1954** and the **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006** prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men respectively.
- b) **SUPREME COURT JUDGEMENT:** The Supreme Court in **"Seema vs. Ashwini Kumar, 2006"** had directed that registration of all types of marriages should be made mandatory.
- c) **CENTRAL GOVT INITIATIVE:** PM Sukanya Samridhi Yojana- small deposit scheme for girl child, launched as a part of the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' campaign.
- d) Parliamentary Standing Committee is **currently examining the Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021**, which seeks to raise the legal marriage age for women from 18 to 21.
- e) **Jaya Jaitley Task Force** – increase the Minimum Age of marriage for girls to 21 years. The same should be increased in a gradual manner.
- f) **STATE INITIATIVES:** Increasing girl's access to schooling and higher education: **Kanyashree Prakalpa scheme** of the **West Bengal government**, a **Conditional Cash Transfer scheme**, aims to ensure that girls stay in school and delay their marriages till at least age 18.
- Aiming to make Odisha child marriage-free by 2030**, the Women and Child Development (WCD) department **has come out with guidelines for declaration of a village or urban area** free of such marriages. As many as **12,000 villages in the State have been declared child marriage-free till date**.

- g) **INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979:** It states that “the betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect.
- h) **SDG 5:** Prevention of Child Marriage is a part of SDG 5 which deals with gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.
- i) **Lesson from Bangladesh:** The law that **significantly increased the penalties** (both financial and jail terms) rather **increased child marriage**, showing that backlash may arise in areas where the legal regime harshly contradicts social norms.

2.4 CHILD ADOPTION:

1) FACTS:

- a) **The Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** is a **statutory body** of the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** that was **set up in 1990**. CARA functions as the **nodal body** for the adoption of Indian Children.
- b) **For first time since 2018-19, adoptions cross 4000-mark** [As per Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)]
- c) **4,009 children** were adopted between **April 2023 and March 2024 by families in India and abroad** – says Govt Data.
- d) **Male bias gone; Hindu couples prefer to adopt girls** – Says Govt data
- e) **SC flags issue of delay in child adoption process: Only 4,000 adoption takes place in the country annually. (October 2023)**
- f) **Lack of Availability of Children: 2,146 children** were available for adoption as against **30,669 prospective adoptive parents (PAPs) registered. (October 2023- CARA)**
- g) **Only 40 children with disabilities** were adopted between **2018 and 2019**, accounting for about 1% of total children adopted in the year.
- h) **Around 28% of the Childcare institutions (CCIs) are not registered with CWC.**

2.5 LEGISLATIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN:

- 1) **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act):** It governs the whole adoption procedure in the country.
- 2) **Adoption Regulations 2017:** The regulation addresses the need for in-family adoptions, post-adoption support, child-centric provisions, time-limit on courts for disposing of adoption deeds, etc.
- 3) **JUVENILE JUSTICE (CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN) AMENDMENT ACT, 2021:** It fulfils India's commitment as a **signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** and the **Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Inter-country Adoption (1993)**.

Parliamentary panel has recommended **district-level surveys** to proactively identify orphaned and abandoned children.

- 4) **The Juvenile Justice Rules of 2016 and the Adoption Regulations of 2017 followed to create the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA).** (CARA is a **statutory body** for the regulation, monitoring and control of all **intra-country and inter-country adoptions**.)
- 5) **Criticism of Juvenile Justice Act 2015 –**
 - a) In 2024, the 17-year-old minor allegedly involved in the **Pune Porsche car crash that killed two techies** was told to submit a 300-word essay on road safety for the bail conditions of the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB).

- b) The 2012 Delhi gang rape case involved a juvenile offender, who was 17 years old at the time of the crime. He was sentenced to three years in a reform facility, with the option to be released after two and a half years.
- 6) **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012**
- 7) **Right to Education Act, 2009**
- 8) **Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986**
- 9) Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice, presented the **118th Report on the Subject 'Review of Guardianship and Adoption Laws'**.
- a) The **Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956** - makes use of the term 'illegitimate' in reference to a child born out of wedlock.
- b) **Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act (HAMA), 1956** (applicable only to Hindus) and the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 (JJ Act) (all religion) both deal with adoption yet have differing criteria.

2.6 CHILD ABUSE:

1) FACTS:

- a) Every **1 in 2 children** is prone to abuse.
- b) In **95% of all cases registered**, the abuser is known to the victim.
- c) Child rape cases, encompassing all forms of penetrative assaults, **has registered a rise of 96 per cent from 2016 to 2022**, according to an analysis of the **NCRB data** by child rights NGO CRY.
- d) According to a report by **child rights NGO CRY**, there has been an **increase of more than 500 per cent** over the **10 years (2006-2016)** in crime against minors.
- e) **More than 2.43 lakh cases under the POCSO Act were pending in Fast-track Special Courts, until Jan 2023.**
- f) **Low Conviction rate:** only close to **3% of the total number of cases**, according to the 2016 NCRB Report.
- g) A report titled the **Global Threat Assessment Report 2021**, released by We Protect Global Alliance has revealed that **Covid-19** had contributed to a **significant spike** in child sexual exploitation and abuse online.
- h) As per **8 children were trafficked every day in India** in 2021 for labour, begging and sexual exploitation. (NCRB)

2) LEGISLATIONS:

- a) **POCSO Act, 2012:** The Act was established to protect children against offences like sexual abuse, sexual harassment and pornography.
- i) **ON INEFFECTIVENESS OF LAWS:** The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data of 2016, mentions the conviction rate as 29.6%, while pendency is as high as 89%.
- ii) **Judicial Delay:** The **Kathua Rape** case took **16 months** for the main accused to be convicted whereas the POCSO Act clearly mentions that the entire trial and conviction process has to be done in one year.
- (1) The number of cases registered under the POCSO Act in Tamil Nadu has seen a steady increase.
- b) **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015:** It is the fundamental law in India in dealing with children in need of care and protection.

3) CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS:

- a) **Article 21:** provides for the right to life and personal liberty.
- b) **Article 21A:** State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years.
- c) **Article 24:** No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

- d) **Article 39(f)**: children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.
- 4) **OTHER INITIATIVES FOR PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE:**
- a) **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign**- addresses the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of women empowerment over a life-cycle continuum.
 - b) **POCSO e-Box** for children (to report child abuse) by NCPDR.
 - c) **“Operation Megh-Chakra”**: major operation code by CBI against circulation and sharing of child sexual abuse material online.
 - d) **Sakhi One Stop Centres**: These centers provide integrated support and assistance to women and children affected by violence, including child sexual abuse.

3

ELDERLY

3.1 FACTS:

- 1) **India has 104 million older people** (60+years), constituting 8.6% of total population. **(Census 2011)**
- 2) **Over 71% of elderly population resides in rural areas.**
- 3) **Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI) 2023 report-**
 - a) The **decadal growth rate** of the elderly population of India currently estimated to be at **41%**.
 - b) **More than 40% of the elderly in India are in the poorest wealth quintile.**
 - c) **Poverty in old age is not a uniform or gender-neutral phenomenon.**
 - d) **Older women are more likely to be widowed, living alone, with no income and with fewer assets of their own, and fully dependent on family for support.**
 - e) **Major challenges facing India’s ageing population are the feminisation and ruralisation of this older population.**
- 4) **Feminisation of ageing: United Nations Population Fund report highlighted:**
 - a) **The sex ratio of the elderly has increased from 938 women to 1,000 men in 1971 to 1,033 in 2011 and is projected to increase to 1,060 by 2026.**
 - b) The report also noted that between 2000 and 2050, the population of 80-plus people would have grown 700% “with a **predominance of widowed and highly dependent very old women**”.
- 5) According to **NSS 75th round on Education** in India, only **5.3% of males and only 1.7% of females of 60 years and above can operate a computer.** The gap is **higher in rural areas.**
- 6) India ranked last **among 48 countries**, as per **2024 Mercer CFA Institute Global Pension Index (MCGPI) - highlighting challenges in adequacy, sustainability, and integrity of its pension system.**
- 7) Antara’s State of Seniors Survey 2020, **over 60 per cent of seniors said they wanted to work beyond retirement age.** This highlights the need for **raising the retirement age** in India.

Silver Economy: It is the system of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services aimed at using the purchasing potential of older and ageing people and satisfying their consumption, living and health needs.

3.2 INITIATIVES:

- 1) **INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES:**
 - a) **Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030)** is endorsed by **World Health Assembly** in August 2020. WHO defines healthy ageing as “the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age.

- b) **Sustainable Development Goal 3** gives attention to well-being for all at all ages.
- 2) **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:**
- a) **National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP), 1999-** envisages State support to ensure financial and food security, health care, shelter, protection and other needs of older persons to improve quality of their lives.
 - b) **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007-** aims to make the provision of maintenance and welfare to old parents and senior citizens more effective. The amendment bill for this act was brought in 2019 but could not be passed.
 - c) **Senior Citizens Welfare Fund-** established under the Finance Act, 2015, to be utilized for such schemes for the promotion of the welfare of senior citizens, in line with the National Policy on Older Persons.
 - d) **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)** - health insurance scheme for the poor and backward class families.
 - e) **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS):** Being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development since 2007.
- 3) **NGOs Working for Old Age People** - Apna Ghar, HelpAge India, Asha Kiran, and Age well foundation.

4

DIFFERENTLY ABLED

4.1 FACTS:

- 1) **2.2% of the total population** are disabled (**Census 2011**). Among the disabled **population 56% are males and 44% are females**.
- 2) **Only 35% of the total disabled persons are workers**.
- 3) **55% of the disabled children with multiple disabilities never attended** educational institutions.
- 4) As per estimates, **only 5-15%** have access to **assistive devices and technologies**.
- 5) Persons with disabilities have **twice the risk of developing conditions** such as depression, asthma, diabetes, stroke, obesity or poor oral health. (WHO)
- 6) Persons with disabilities find inaccessible and unaffordable transportation **15 times more difficult** than for those without disabilities.

4.2 INITIATIVES:

- 1) **Court of Chief Commissioners of PwDs LANDMARK JUDGEMENTS:**
 - a) **Equitable access of offices to Divyangjans-** mandated that any government office in the country that are not accessible to Divyangjan, must **relocate their services to the ground floor or another accessible location** for Divyangjans.
 - b) **Air travel access-** emphasized that **all airlines are responsible for implementing the provisions** of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.
- 2) **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:**
 - a) **Draft National policy on PwD:**
 - i) States and Union Territories should add a provision on compliance with the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016** when granting permission or recognition to educational institutions.
 - ii) Disability module should also be included in MBBS and other medical courses.

- iii) current national programme on prevention of disabilities by Health Ministry focuses on “traditional causes”. But there are other causes of disability, including malnourishment, socio-cultural factors, medical negligence, and impairment caused by disasters.
- b) **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016:** It recognises **21 types** of disabilities.
- c) **Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan)** as a nation-wide Campaign for achieving universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)
- d) The **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment** launched a **6- month community based Inclusive Development (CBID) Program** on rehabilitation of Divyangjan/Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
- e) **PRASHAST:** a **Disability Screening mobile app**, covering 21 disabilities, including the benchmark disabilities.
- i) help in **screening disability conditions** at the school level and will generate the **schoolwise report** for initiating the certification process, as per **guidelines of Samagra Shiksha**.
- f) **24 X 7 Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline - 'KIRAN'**
- g) **Govt. to set up sports academy for the differently-abled: KERELA CM**
- h) The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** launched a national **Anganwadi Protocol for Divyang Children to track and help children with disabilities**.
- i) **National Action Plan for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities** Under Scheme for Implementation of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA).
- j) **Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992-** aims to provide Rehabilitation council for India, which would provide training for person who profess rehabilitation profession and also ask for maintenance of such councils register and other matters which are connected to such rehabilitation.
- k) **Assistance to Disabled Persons** for Purchase/ Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP Scheme).
- l) **Chhattisgarh** started the initiative of nominating at least one disabled person in each panchayat.
- 3) **INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES:**
- a) **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006.** India has ratified it.
- b) Adoption of **Incheon Strategy** “To make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific.
- c) Signatory to **Declaration on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region**.
- d) **Biwako Millennium Framework** working towards an inclusive, barrier free and rights-based society.
- e) The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** and **United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)** has jointly launched the first **Global Report on Assistive Technology (GReAT)**.
- 4) **CASE STUDY: Differently abled food delivery man in Tamil Nadu stands as a shining example of hard work.** 36-year-old **T. Vaitheeswaran of Varaganeri in Tiruchi**, a physically challenged food delivery executive, who has to crawl to move around works 16 hours a day to lead a **self-sufficient and dignified life**.



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5

TRANSGENDERS

5.1 FACTS:

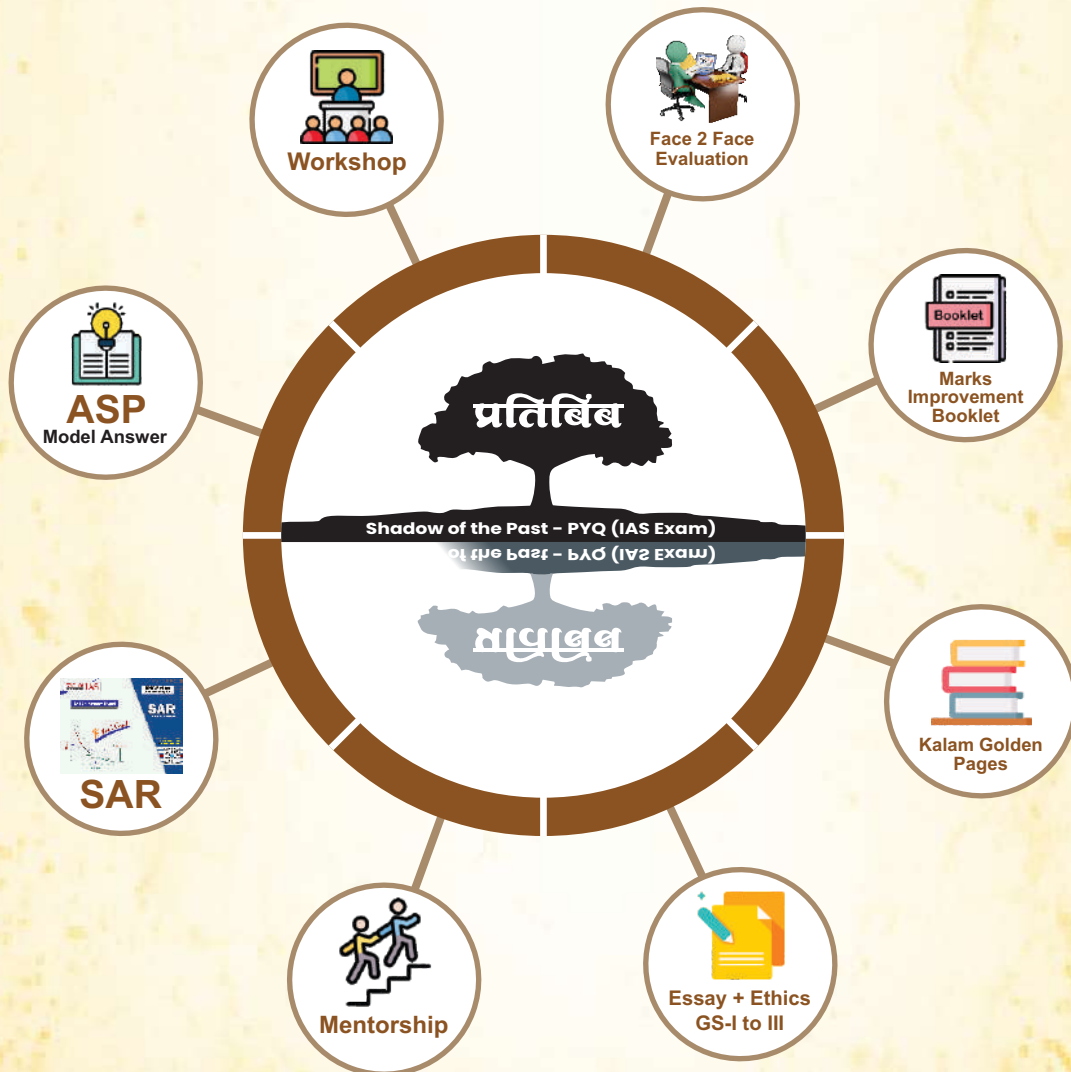
- 1) The **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019** defines a Transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth. It includes trans-men and trans-women, persons with intersex variations, gender-queers, and persons with socio-cultural identities, such as kinnar and hijra.
- 2) **NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION FINDINGS:**
 - a) The total population- **4.8 lakh but only 30,000** are registered with election commission. **(2011 census)**
 - b) **99 percent of transgender people have experienced social rejections** on multiple occasions.
 - c) **96% of the transgenders are denied jobs** and are forced to take low paying or undignified work for livelihood.
 - d) **57%** are keen on getting **sex-alignment surgery** but don't have requisite financial resources.
- 3) **Harassment – 60%** of trans genders report to have experienced harassment in high school
- 4) Only **18% reported incidents of abuse & harassment** to any authority
- 5) The **HIV prevalence** among Transgenders, in India, was estimated to be **3.1% in 2017**, the second highest prevalence among all key populations in the country.

5.2 INITIATIVES:

- 1) **IMPORTANT JUDGEMENTS** that paved way for LGBTQ community –
 - a) **Naz foundation case** declared **section 377 of the Indian Penal Code to be unconstitutional**. It decriminalization of homosexual acts involving consenting adults throughout India.
 - b) **NALSA judgement 2014** - For the first time in legal history, **Transgender people were recognized as citizens** of this country, and fundamental rights extended to them.
 - c) **Navtej Singh Johar vs. Union of India** decriminalized homosexuality and is a landmark judgement.
 - d) SC in **Supriyo @ Supriya Chakraborty vs Union of India case, 2023** **unanimously refused** to accord legal recognition to marriages between persons of same sex. The right to marry is a statutory right, **not a constitutional right**.
 - e) SC **upheld restriction** imposed by Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) **on queer couples from adopting**.
- 2) **STATE INITIATIVES:**
 - a) **Karnataka** has become the **first state in the country** to provide **1% horizontal reservation** for transgender people in all government services.
 - b) **NITI Aayog report “Best Practices in Social Sector”** referred to **“Prayatna” project**, a livelihood and enterprise training program for Transgender people in Delhi-NCR.
 - c) **Odisha- ‘Sweekruti’** to secure the rights of transgender persons and ensure equitable justice
 - d) **Kerala: Transgender policy in 2015**, Schools, Justice Board for welfare of transgenders, Fully Transgender run metro station, G-Taxis: entirely owned and run by transgenders, free sex-reassignment surgeries.
 - e) **Tamil Nadu:** Transgender welfare policy, free surgeries, the **first state to form Transgender board** with members from the community.
- 3) **UNION GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE:**
 - a) The **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019**
 - b) **National Council for Transgender Persons.**

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I want to thank Kalam IAS for their support in CSE 2023. I was a part of the interview guidance course where I found the current affairs material to be extremely good, and I have also benefited previously from the value addition material provided by Kalam IAS for Mains
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- c) **SMILE: Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise” Scheme**- a Central Sector scheme, launched under the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.
 - i) Designed to provide welfare and rehabilitation to Transgender community and people engaged in the act of begging.
 - d) **Garima Greh:** A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons.
- 4) **CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES:** Right to equality before law and equal protection under the law is guaranteed under **article 14, 15, 16, 19 and 21** of the constitution.
- 5) **International best practices:**
 - a) **Netherlands was the first country to legalize same-sex marriages** in 2001.
 - b) Currently, there are **more than 130 countries that have decriminalized homosexuality**.
- 6) **Best Examples –**
 - a) **Narthaki Nataraj** - India's first transgender Padma Shri recipient.
 - b) **Sathyasri Sharmila** - the first transgender lawyer
 - c) **Manabi Bandopadhyay** - India's first transgender college principal
 - d) **Prithika Yashini** - India's first transgender police officer
 - e) **Naaz Joshi** - transgender beauty queen, activist, and motivational speaker, she won the Miss World Diversity beauty pageant three times in a row.
 - f) **Shabnam Mausi** - India's first transgender MLA
 - g) **Malini Das** - first transgender engineer in Rajasthan
 - h) **Aishwarya Rutuparna Pradhan** - India's first openly transgender civil servant and IAS officer.

6

HEALTH

6.1 Facts:

- 1) **Expenditure:**
 - a) **India is among the countries with the lowest public healthcare budget** in the world.
 - b) As a **percentage of GDP**, Health expenditure stands at **2.1% of GDP in FY23 (it was 2.2% in FY22)**. (Target as per National Health Policy, 2017- 2.5 percent of GDP by 2025). {5% by China and Russia, 8% by South Africa, and over 9% by Brazil.}
 - c) **Private healthcare caters to around 70% of India's population.**
 - d) **Findings of NATIONAL HEALTH ACCOUNT (NHA) ESTIMATES, 2020-21 and 2021-22:**
 - i) **Decline in Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE):** From 2014-15 to 2021-22, the share of OOPE in Total Health Expenditure (THE) decreased from 62.6% to 39.4%.
 - ii) **The government's share in Total Health Expenditure (THE) rose from 29% in 2014-15 to 48% in 2021-22.**
 - iii) **Total Health Expenditure:** India's Total Health Expenditure rose to Rs. 9,04,461 crores, **constituting 3.83% of GDP**, with a per capita expenditure of Rs. 6,602 in 2021-22.
- 2) **Health Infrastructure and Workforce:**
 - a) **Around 65% hospital beds cater to 50% population** of country: **NITI Aayog**
 - b) **India's doctor-population ratio is 1:834**, assuming 80 per cent availability of registered allopathic doctors and 565,000 Ayurvedic, Unani, Siddha and homeopathic doctors- **Better than 1:1000 as prescribed by WHO**. (April 2022)

3) Health Indicators: As per NFHS-5 (2019-21):

- a) Sex ratio of the total population (females per 1000 males)- **1020** [This is the **first time**, in any census or nfhs, that the sex ratio is skewed in favour of women.
- b) **The Total Fertility Rates (TFR)**, an average number of children per women, has come down **below the replacement level of fertility (2.1 children per woman)** in the country.
 - i) **Reasons:** Increasing use of contraceptives, better family planning and girl education, access to better health infrastructure and increase in institutional delivery.
- c) **Institutional births have increased substantially** from 79 per cent to **89 percent** at all-India Level, comparing to NFHS 4.
- d) **Child Nutrition indicators- Stunting - 36 per cent, Wasting- 19 per cent and underweight - 32 percent** at all India level.
- e) **Exclusive breastfeeding to children** under age 6 months is **64 per cent** in 2019-21.
- 4) **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Under Five mortality rate (U5MR) and neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR)** have shown a steady decline.
 - a) **Under five mortalities declined** from 126 in 1990 to **42** in 2019-21.
 - b) **Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births) declined** from 89 in 1990 to **35.2** in 2019-21.
 - c) **Neonatal mortality** rate declined from 57 in 1990 to **25** in 2019-21.
 - d) **Maternal Mortality rate** declined from 398 in 1997-1998 to **113** in 2016-18. (Now for calculating MMR, 3-year average is taken) – Sample Registration Survey Data.
- 5) **Accessibility:** About 80% of doctors, 75% of dispensaries and 60% of hospitals are **present in urban areas**.
- 6) **NITI AAYOG REPORT ON PERFORMANCE OF DISTRICT HOSPITALS:** District hospitals in India have on an **average 24 beds per 1 lakh population**, with **Bihar having the lowest average of six beds** and **Puducherry the highest of 222**.
- 7) **Insufficient medical personnel:** 61% PHCs have just one doctor, 33% of PHCs do not have a lab technician, and 20% don't have a pharmacist.
- 8) **Supreme court Judgement for Right to Health:**
 - a) **In Bandhua Mukti Morcha v Union of India & Others** → The SC interpreted the right to health under **Article 21**.
 - b) **In State of Punjab & others v Mohinder Singh Chawla** → The SC reaffirmed that the right to health is fundamental to the **right to life**.
 - c) **In Paschim Banga Ket Mazdoor Samity case** → The scope of Article 21 was further widened; herein the court held that it is the responsibility of the government to provide adequate medical aid to every person and to work in the welfare of the general public.

6.2 Reproductive rights of women:

- 1) **Only 55% women are empowered to make choices** over healthcare, contraceptives & abortions. – UNFPA Report.
- 2) **Vasectomy accounts for only 2%** of all sterilizations which happen in India.

6.3 Non-communicable diseases:

- 1) NCDs contribute to around 38 million (68%) of all the deaths globally and to about 5.87 million (60%) of all deaths in India.
- 2) **30% of deaths** in low-income countries **occur underage of 60**.

6.4 Global best practices:

- 1) Family clinics in **Brazil**.
- 2) Polyclinics in **Cuba**.
- 3) **Thailand** is one of the few developing countries in the world that have successfully implemented Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

6.5 Steps taken to achieve universal health coverage in India:

- 1) **National Health Policy 2017** laid out the roadmap to achieving UHC emphasizing on increasing levels of public financing (to **2.5% GDP by 2025**).
- 2) **Ayushman Bharat, a flagship scheme of Government of India:** Improving the comprehensive primary healthcare infrastructure, Offering substantial financial protection to the poorest 50 crore Indians with secondary and tertiary insurance.
- 3) **Rapid developments towards digital health - The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission** was recently launched to provide a digital health ID to the people who will hold their health records. The scheme will come under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.
- 4) **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan:** to provide assured, comprehensive and quality antenatal care at free of cost to all pregnant women on the 9th of every month.
- 5) **Mission Indradhanush** – To ensure full immunisation.
- 6) **POSHAN Abhiyan** also known as **National Nutrition Mission**.
- 7) **Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK):** It aims at early detection and management of the 4Ds: Defects at Birth, Diseases in Children, Deficiency Conditions, Developmental Delays including Disabilities
- 8) **Karnataka is the first state to provide UHC under the Arogya Bhagya scheme.**



6.6 Digitalisation of healthcare:

- 1) **National Health Mission (NHM)** for services like Telemedicine, Tele-Radiology, Tele-Oncology, Tele-Ophthalmology and Hospital Information System (HIS).
- 2) **Telemedicine Practice Guidelines, 2020** for regularization and diversification of tele-consultation services across the country.
- 3) **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission** will connect the **digital health solutions of hospitals across the country with each other**.
- 4) **e-Sanjeevani: telemedicine platform** - initially designed for **physician-to-physician consultations, and has grown to include patient consultations as well**.
- 5) Proposed **National Health Stack by Niti Aayog**, a nationally shared digital infrastructure usable by both Centre and State across public and private sectors, to enable rapid creation of diverse solutions in health.
- 6) **Supported to states under National Health Mission (NHM) for services like** Telemedicine, Tele-Radiology, Tele-Oncology, Tele- Ophthalmology and Hospital Information System (HIS).

- 7) **National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)** - aims to create an integrated healthcare system linking practitioners with the patients digitally by giving them access to real-time health records.
- 8) **Healthcare Professionals Registry (HPR)**-comprehensive repository of all healthcare professionals involved in delivery of healthcare services across both modern and traditional systems of medicine.
- 9) **ABHA Mobile App (PHR)** - can help in creation of an ABHA address, linking & viewing of health records and managing user consents.
- 10) **Telemedicine Practice Guidelines, 2020** for regularization and diversification of tele-consultation services across the country.

7

MENTAL HEALTH

7.1 Facts:

- 1) According to an estimate by the World Health Organization (WHO), **mental illness makes about 15% of the total disease conditions around the world.**
- 2) WHO has labelled India as the world's '**most depressed country.**' WHO estimates that about **7.5 percent of Indians suffer from some mental disorder**, with no discernible rural-urban differences.
- 3) The proportional contribution of mental disorders to the total disease burden had **doubled between 1990 and 2017.**
- 4) **As per NCRB report 2022**, there is a consistent, **concerning rise in suicide rates** from 9.9 per lakh population in 2017 to 12.4 per lakh population in 2022.
- 5) **More than two lakh Indians commit suicide per year.** India now has the **highest rate of suicides in the 15-29 age category.**
- 6) **Male to female suicide ratio is 2:1.**
- 7) 42.5% of people working in the private sector are battling either depression, anxiety or some form of similar issue **according to the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) report.**
- 8) The **World Happiness Report 2025**, issued by the **UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network**, ranks India **on 118th spot out of 147 countries.**
- 9) India's formal mental health system has a limited number of **specialists; 9,000 psychiatrists for 1.3 billion people.**
- 10) Presently, **India spends 0.06% of its health budget on mental healthcare (who.org)**
- 11) **Impact of pandemic: The Lancet reported that there has been an increase of 35% of depression and anxiety cases.**

7.2 Initiative taken for mental health:

- 1) **Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (Tele-MANAS):** initiative under the National Tele Mental Health Programme (NTMHP) (announced in the Union Budget 2022-23): To further improve access to quality mental health counselling and care services in the country.
- 2) **MoHFW** also issued Guidelines "**Minding our minds during the COVID-19**" to deal with mental health issues.
- 3) **Manodarpan**, an initiative by Ministry of Education as a part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.
- 4) **National Mental Health Programme:** implementation of the District Mental Health Programme (DMHP) under NMHP in 655 districts of the country
- 5) **National Mental Health Policy:** to provide universal psychiatric care and include psychiatric treatment in primary health care.

- 6) **Indian Mental Healthcare Act 2017**- effectively decriminalized attempted suicide which was punishable under Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code.
- 7) **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2017**- It promotes and protects the rights and dignity of people with disabilities in various aspects of life – educational, social, legal, economic, cultural and political.
- 8) **SAATHI**: South-Asian Mental Health Outreach Program of ASHA International that aims to promote awareness about mental health.
- 9) **Unique Friendship Benches Initiative**- recently inaugurated by WHO to promote mental health- 32 friendship benches were installed in prominent locations in Doha representing the 32 countries participating in the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar.

8

SANITATION

8.1 Facts:

- 1) **UNGA recognized access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right.** (2010)
- 2) **India and WASH strategy**: According to the **2020 analysis** by the **World Resources Institute**:
 - a) It would take India **3.2% of the GDP** to deliver sustainable water management by 2030 to deliver sustainable water management.
 - b) Securing water for communities across the world by 2030 could **cost just over 1%** of global GDP.
- 3) Improving WASH (Water, sanitation, hygiene) across the public healthcare facilities in India for a year would **cost \$354 million** approximately.
- 4) **Lack of accessibility**: As per the census 2011, more than 50 percent of India's population defecated in the open, and recent data showed that about 60% of rural households and 89% of urban households have access to toilets.
- 5) Even though India **was declared Open Defecation Free by the government in 2019**, the latest **NFHS - 5 survey conducted in 2019-21 showed that 19 percent of households do not use any toilet facility.**
- 6) **Clean drinking water challenge**- approximately **500 million litres of wastewater** from industrial sources is dumped into the Ganga daily.
- 7) **Biomedical waste**: According to a **Central Pollution Control Board report**, released in November 2020, India generated around 33,000 tonnes of Covid-19 biomedical waste between April and November.
- 8) **Access to clean water**: In India over 120 million households lack access to clean water near their homes, the highest in the world (the UN-Water). Also, in rural India, close to 90% households do not have piped connections.
- 9) **Till September 2023, 75% Indian Villages achieved ODF Plus status** under Phase-II of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen).

8.2 INITIATIVES TAKEN:

- 1) **Jal Jeevan Mission**- It envisioned to provide adequate safe drinking water through individual household tap connections to all households in rural India by 2024.
 - a) Till Jan 2024, **out of 19.27 Crore rural households in the country, more than 14.24 Crore (73.93%) households are reported to have tap water supply in their homes.**
 - b) Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), **83 districts have become 'Har Ghar Jal' districts.**
- 2) **10 Years of Swachh Bharat Mission 2014 to 2024**- Performance of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) [SBM-G]:
 - a) **Over 100 million individual household toilets built over a five-year period.**
 - b) Sanitation coverage increased from 39 per cent in 2014 to 100 per cent in 2019.
 - c) **> 6 lakh villages declared themselves Open Defecation Free (ODF).**

- d) **IMPACT –**
- 3 lakh diarrheal deaths avoided between 2014 and 2019 (WHO Study 2018)
 - 58 per cent higher cases of wasting among children reported in non-ODF areas (BMGF)
 - 93 per cent women reported feeling safer (UNICEF) INR
 - 50,000 saved annually by a household (UNICEF)
 - 12.70 times less likelihood of groundwater contamination reported traceable to humans (UNICEF)
 - 60,000-70,000 child deaths averted annually (Nature)
- 3) WHO adopted **WASH Strategy (2018-25)** - WASH is a prerequisite to prevent infections like cholera, diarrhoea (**the 2nd leading cause of childhood mortality in India**), and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).
- 4) **Awareness:**
- '**Swachh Jal Se Suraksha**': to create awareness on the importance of clean and safe drinking water.
 - Awareness campaign on benefits of hand washing:** Upon the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, **call tunes** is promoting awareness about benefits of frequent hand washing.

8.3 WASH is an important component of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2030:

- SDG 3:** Good health and well-being.
- SDG 6:** Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water sanitation for all.

9

EDUCATION

9.1 CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS:

- Education, including vocational education, is in the **concurrent list of Indian Constitution**.
- Education (for 6-14 years of children) is a fundamental right according to Article 21A** of the Indian constitution. Right to Education act was enacted to put it into effect.
- Other provisions, in the constitution, related to education are **Article 45, 15(3), 15(4), 29, 46, 350A, Entry 63 and 66 of the union lists, Item 25 of the Concurrent List etc.**
- Other provisions:**
 - There are also **reservation systems** available for the socially underprivileged people. The present statistics is 7.5% of the scheduled tribes, 15% for the scheduled castes and 27% of the other backward class, but the exact percentages vary from state to state.
 - 10% EWS reservation** for economically weaker sections – brought through **103rd Constitutional Amendment Act**.
 - In **Haryana**, the reservation is 18% for SCs and 1% for OBCs and 0% for STs, based on local demographics.
 - In **Tamil Nadu**, the reservation is 18% for SCs and 1% for STs, based on local demographics.

9.2 FACTS:

- National education outlay has been increased by 13 per cent** from the previous year, with **school education** having a significant increase of **16.5 per cent** and **higher education by 8 per cent**. (presently, **2.9 % of GDP**)- much **lower than the ambition of India's education budget to be at 6 per cent** of GDP set out in the National Education Policy 2020.

- 2) **Education spending dropped in 2020 and 2021** because of the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused disruption to school functioning and planned activities as well as re-prioritisation of funds to healthcare and pandemic management.
- 3) **PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**
 - a) **Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2020-21** on school education of India:
 - i) Total students enrolled in school education from primary to higher secondary stood at 25.38 crore. (increased)
 - ii) Gross enrolment ratio increased both at primary and secondary level.
 - iii) Dropout rate in the primary level has increased while in the secondary level has decreased.
 - b) **Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024 – By NGO Pratham Foundation**
 - i) **Pre-primary (Age Group 3-5 Years) Enrolment - 77.4% in 2024**
 - ii) **Elementary Enrolment (Age Group 6-14 Years): 98.1% in 2024**
 - iii) **Older Children (Age Group 15-16 Years): Enrolment - 7.9% in 2024, with girls at a higher rate of 8.1%**
 - iv) **Student attendance increased from 72.4% in 2018 to 75.9% in 2024**
 - v) **Reading and Arithmetic Skills:**
 - (1) In 2024, **23.4% of Standard (Std) III** children in government schools could **read Std II-level text**, up from 16.3% in 2022.
 - (2) In 2024, 45.8% of Std VIII students could solve basic arithmetic problems, showing slight improvement.
 - vi) **Smartphone Access and Usage (Digital Literacy):**
 - (1) **Access:** Nearly 90% of 14-16-year-olds have **smartphone access**, with boys (85.5%) using them more than girls (79.4%).
 - (2) **Ownership:** 27% of 14-year-olds and 37.8% of 16-year-olds **own smartphones**.
 - (3) **Use:** 82.2% of children use smartphones, with 57% for education and 76% **for social media**.
 - (4) **Digital Safety:** 62% of children know how to block/report profiles, and 55.2% know how to make **profiles private**.
 - vii) **Attendance:** Student attendance increased from 72.4% in 2018 to **75.9% in 2024**, and **teacher attendance increased from 85.1% to 87.5%**.
 - viii) **School Facilities:**
 - (1) **Usable girls' toilets** increased from 66.4% in 2018 to 72% in 2024.
 - (2) **Drinking water availability** rose from 74.8% to 77.7%.
 - (3) The **use of non-textbook books** (e.g., novels, short stories, folk tales) by students increased from 36.9% to 51.3%.
 - (4) The **percentage of schools with playgrounds** remained stable at around 66%.
 - c) During pandemic, children (age 6-14 years) '**not currently enrolled in schools**' increased from 2.5 percent in 2018 to 4.6 percent in 2021.
 - d) **Students in lower grade found it difficult to do online activities** compared to higher grade students.
 - e) **Learning outcomes: Dip in performance levels across subjects and grades. (National Achievement Survey NAS 2021)**
 - i) **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION:** According to the Stanford AI Index 2024, India ranks first globally in AI skill penetration with a score of 2.8, ahead of the US (2.2) and Germany (1.9).
 - ii) India **leads** the world by far in terms of **women with AI skills**.
 - iii) Women account for a **third of AI-related scientific publications** in India.

- f) **LEARNING POVERTY (WORLD BANK) - 70% of children by the age of 10 are not able to read a simple text.** (Whereas, before pandemic proportion of such children was only 53%.)
- iv) According to the World Bank, Learning Poverty means being unable to read and understand a simple text by the age of 10.
- g) **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR IMPROVING LEARNING OUTCOMES:**
- (1) **Ministry of Education released NCF-SE**, prepared by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)- Aims to positively transform the school education system of India through positive changes in curriculum including pedagogy.
 - (2) **National Education Policy 2020 Aims:**
 - (a) Increase public investment to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.
 - (b) Increase GER to 100% in preschool to secondary level by 2030, whereas GER in Higher Education, including vocational education, from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035.
 - (3) The newly released **School Education Quality Index (SEQI)** by **NITI Aayog** aims to shift the focus to learning outcomes.
 - (4) The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**: The target has been set to acquire basic literacy, and numerical knowledge by all students by class 3. This target is to be achieved by the year 2025.
 - (5) **National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading Comprehension and Numeracy (NIPUN India)** Programme
 - (6) The decision of India to join the **Programme for International Student Assessment** and the merger of schemes under **Samagra Shiksha** are encouraging signs that India is moving in this direction.
 - (7) Government launched a **100-day reading campaign 'Padhe Bharat'**.
 - (8) **DIKSHA**, one of the 12 Digital Global Goods by India, provides a QR-coded textbooks to elementary school children.
 - (9) **School Health & Wellness Programme**: has been incorporated under **Ayushman Bharat Programme**.
- 2) **MAJOR INITIATIVES FOR STUDENTS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC:**
- a) **PM e-VIDYA** that unifies all efforts related to digital/online/ on-air education to enable coherent multi-mode access to education.
 - b) **For the differently abled**: Specific DTH channel and Digitally Accessible Information System (DAISY) and in Sign Language.
 - c) **Blueprint of National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR)** was released or development of digital infrastructure.
 - d) **Vidyanjali portal** that enables the community/volunteers to interact and connect directly with schools to share their knowledge and skills and contribute in the form of assets/material/equipment.
 - e) **PM DIKSHA**: Diksha serves as National Digital Infrastructure for Teachers and most of the modern teachers are having digital knowledge.
 - f) **PMGDISHA**: 'Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan' PMGDISHA) was launched in 2017 to make 6 crore rural households digitally literate.
- 3) **HIGHER EDUCATION**: India's higher education system is the **third largest in the world**, next to the United States and China.
- a) **ALL INDIA SURVEY ON HIGHER EDUCATION**: annually released by Dept. of Higher Education.
 - i) **The all-India average GER was 28.4 per cent in the 2021-22 period. (Jan 2024)**
 - ii) **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at all India levels has increased over the years.** GER has increased to 28.4 per cent in 2021-22 from 27.3 per cent in 2020-21 (**GLOBAL AVERAGE- 36.7%**)

- iii) **Tamil Nadu leads in higher education enrolment** with a GER of 47%, surpassing the national average of 28.4%. **Chandigarh has the highest GER** at 64.8%.
- b) **Female enrolment in STEM courses stands at 43 per cent** which is **one of the highest** in the world.
- c) **QS World University Rankings 2025**
 - i) **India has 2 institutions in the top 50**, with Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT-D) ranked 44th and IIT Bombay ranked 48th, underscoring their prominence in Asia's higher education.
 - ii) **5 Indian institutions are in the top 100**, IIT Madras (56th), IIT Kharagpur (60th), Indian Institute of Science (62nd), IIT Kanpur (67th), and University of Delhi (81st).
- d) **Formal vocational** among youth (age 15-29 years) and working population (age 15-59 years) **have improved** from **3.2% in 2019- 20 to 4.2% in 2022- 23**. {Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2021-22}.
- e) **Gender Inequality Index (GII), 2022**: India stands at rank **108th** out of 193 countries, with a score of 0.437.

9.3 INITIATIVES:

1) FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION:

- a) **STARS project** partially funded by the **World Bank** under the new National Education Policy (**NEP**) to support states in strengthening the school education system.
- b) **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan, Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Mahila Samakhya.**

9.4 FOR HIGHER EDUCATION:

- 1) **National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS)** has been extended for the next five years **New UGC regulation** for Open and Distance Learning. - provides apprenticeship in the emerging and frontier technology such as Artificial Intelligence, drone technology etc.
- 2) **Academic Bank of Credit**: it would digitally store the academic credits earned from various recognized Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) such that credits so earned can be accounted for award of degree by any given HEI. (Launched in 2021)
- 3) **e-PG Pathshala** boosting mainstreaming of Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs).
- 4) **Unnat Bharat Abhiyan**: The objective of the scheme is to engage reputed higher educational institutions (central and state; public and private) to understand and work in rural areas
- 5) **For better regulation of HEIs**: Higher Education Commission of India (**HECI**) was proposed to act as an overarching regulator of higher education by replacing UGC or AITCE.
- 6) **National Credit Framework (NCrF)**, proposed as part of NEP 2020, is an umbrella framework for skilling, re-skilling, up-skilling, accreditation and evaluation in educational and skilling institutions and workforce.
- 7) **Skill Assessment Matrix for Vocational Advancement of Youth (SAMVAY)**: A credit framework for skill based vocational courses which was launched by Ministry of Education.
- 8) **Promotion of higher education in regional languages**: Union Minister of Home Affairs launched the **Hindi version of MBBS** course books in Madhya Pradesh.
- 9) **PARAKH** (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) was introduced under National Education Policy 2020.
 - a) It will help **colleges to identify learning gaps** so that students can be industry ready.
- 10) The **Ministry of Education** has accepted the proposed reforms in the **accreditation system of Higher Educational Institutions, as recommended by Dr. K. Radhakrishnan Committee.**

9.5 ENHANCING RESEARCH:

- 1) India's **gross expenditure on R&D is 0.65% of its GDP**, lower than the 2-3% of GDP spent by the top 10 economies.
- 2) **Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE)** scheme
- 3) **Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF)** Scheme
- 4) **IMPRINT** (IMPActing Research Innovation and Technology) India.
- 5) **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (NRF) Act, 2023**: It seeks to regulate all **research and development in the fields of natural sciences** establishments in India.
 - a) Envisages spending of Rs. 50,000 crore for five years, out of which Rs. 36,000 crores, **almost 80%, is going to come from non-government sources**, from industry & philanthropists, from domestic as well as outside sources.
 - b) It will catapult us to the **league of developed nations** pioneering new research in new frontiers modelled on the US National Science Foundation (NSF).
- 6) **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** - to create and promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship

9.6 DIGITAL DIVIDE:

- 1) **DEFINITION**: It is the gap that exists between individuals, demographics and region who have access to modern information and communication technology and those who lack access.
- 2) **Only 8% rural children were studying online** regularly amidst the pandemic.
- 3) **55% children** from marginalized sections **don't have access to mobile phones**.
- 4) **ASER 2024- Gender Disparity in Digital Skills**- 36.2% of boys owned a personal smartphone compared to 26.9% of girls.
- 5) **India Inequality Report 2022 by Oxfam India - Women** constitute only **1/3rd of internet users** in India and 28 percent in rural areas.
- 6) **COVID- 19 and digital divide**:
 - a) **Fewer than 15% of rural Indian households have internet access** (as opposed to 42% urban Indian households). (2017-18 NSSO)
 - b) **ASER report 2020**- only **one- third of the school children** are pursuing online education and **32% doing live online classes**.
 - c) **Children with disabilities** find it more difficult to participate in online classes.
 - d) **More than 80 percent teachers** said that they **could not maintain an emotional connect** with their students.
 - i) **The issue of one-way communication between the teacher and the student**, which made it difficult to ascertain if the students were understanding what was being taught.
 - e) **A mere 13% of people surveyed (aged above five) in rural areas-just 8.5% of females-could use the internet.**
 - f) **Dalits & Adivasis** at greater disadvantage as a **mere 5% had access to online classes**.

9.7 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2025 – By UNDP

- 1) India has been ranked **130th out of 193 countries (moved up 3 spots)** and territories in the 2025 Human Development Report (HDR).
- 2) **Its HDI value rising from 0.676 to 0.685**.
- 3) The country remains in the "medium human development" category, though it is approaching the threshold for "high human development" (HDI \geq 0.700)
- 4) **Progress in Key Areas**:

- a) **Life Expectancy:** India's life expectancy rose from 58.6 years in 1990 to 72 years in 2023.
 - b) **Education:** India's mean years of schooling have increased, with children now expected to stay in school for 13 years, up from 8.2 years in 1990.
 - c) **National Income:** India's Gross National Income per capita rose over fourfold, from USD 2,167 in 1990 to USD 9,046 in 2023 based on 2021 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).
 - d) **AI Skills Growth:** India is emerging as a global AI leader with the highest self-reported AI skills penetration.
- 5) **Challenge - India ranks 102nd on the Gender Inequality Index (GII) with a score of 0.403 .**

10

POVERTY

- 1) **DEFINITION:** According to **World Bank**, Poverty is pronounced deprivation in well-being, and comprises many dimensions. It includes low incomes and the inability to acquire the basic goods and services necessary for survival with dignity.

2) FACTS:

a) **National Multidimensional Poverty Index 2023:**

- i) **NITI Aayog's Report 'National Multidimensional Poverty Index: A Progress Review 2023'.**
- ii) **A record 13.5 crore people moved out of multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21.**
- iii) **Steep decline in number of multidimensionally poor** from 24.85% to 14.96% between 2015-16 and 2019-21.
- iv) **Rural areas saw the fastest decline in poverty** from 32.59% to 19.28%.
- v) **India on track to achieve SDG Target 1.2 much ahead of 2030 deadline.**

POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMS IN INDIA:

- 1) Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)
- 2) Jawahar Rozgar Yojana/Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana
- 3) Rural Housing
- 4) Food for Work Programme
- 5) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)
- 6) Annapurna Scheme
- 7) Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)
- 8) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) 2005
- 9) National Rural Livelihood Mission: Aajeevika (2011)
- 10) National Urban Livelihood Mission
- 11) Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
- 12) Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana.

- vi) **Reason:** Government's dedicated focus on improving access to sanitation, nutrition, cooking fuel, financial inclusion, drinking water, and electricity has led to significant advancements in these areas.

- b) **BPL households spend 70%** of their income on food.
- c) **Poverty estimation in India** is carried out by **NITI Aayog's task force** through the calculation of poverty line based on the data captured by the **National Sample Survey Office** under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI).
 - i) Poverty line estimation in India is based on the **consumption expenditure** and not on the income levels of the National Sample Survey Organisation.
 - ii) **Alagh Committee (1979)** determined a poverty line based on a minimum daily requirement of 2400 and 2100 calories for an adult in Rural and Urban area respectively.
 - iii) **Tendulkar Committee** reported that around 21.9% people fall below poverty line while Rangarajan Committee stated around 30%.

- iv) As per the Rangarajan committee report (2014), the poverty line is estimated as **Monthly Per Capita Expenditure of Rs. 1407 in urban areas and Rs. 972 in rural areas**. Based on this methodology, it estimated that the **number of poor were 19% higher in rural areas and 41% more in urban areas than that of Tendulkar committee formula**.
- v) In India, **21.9% of the population lives below the national poverty line in 2011**.

CHANGING FACE OF POVERTY						
Year	Poverty ratio (%)			No. of poor (million)		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
LAKDAWALA METHOD						
1973-74	56.4	49.0	54.9	261.3	60.0	321.3
1977-78	53.1	45.2	51.3	264.3	64.6	328.9
1983	45.7	40.8	44.5	252.0	70.9	322.9
1987-88	39.1	38.2	38.9	231.9	75.2	307.1
1993-94	37.3	32.4	36.0	244.0	76.3	320.3
2004-05	28.3	25.7	27.5	220.9	80.8	301.7
TENDULKAR METHOD						
2004-05	41.8	25.7	37.2	326.3	80.8	407.1
2009-10	33.8	20.9	29.8	278.2	76.5	354.7
2011-12	25.7	13.7	21.9	216.7	53.1	269.8
RANGARAJAN METHOD						
2009-10	39.6	35.1	38.2	325.9	128.7	454.6
2011-12	30.9	26.4	29.5	260.5	102.5	363.0

Source: Planning Commission




Figure 2: poverty estimates of India

URBAN POVERTY

- Definition:** Form of poverty that is particularly visible in megacities, characterised by poor living circumstances and income, as well as a lack of essential utilities and a bad quality of life.
- A **slum** is defined by **World Bank** as a **group of individuals living under the same roof, lacking one or more of the basic necessities**.
- According to **NITI Aayog** estimates, **nearly 8.81% of the Urban population are Multidimensional Poor**.
- Poverty and inequality are increasingly spreading in cities globally- **UN Habitat**.
- As per **Slum Census 2011 – Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**
 - The **slum population constitutes 5.1 per cent** of the total population of the country.
 - The **slum dwellers in 1743 cities constitute 18.5 percent of the total urban population of the States and Union Territories** reporting slum population.
- According to **World Bank data**, **49 percent of India's urban population lived in slums in 2020, down from 55 percent in 2002**.
- Initiatives to tackle urban poverty:**
 - Smart cities Mission:** to develop smart cities and make them citizen friendly and sustainable.
 - AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation)** to improve quality of life for all in cities.
 - Jal Jeevan Mission (urban):** To provide universal coverage of water supply to all households through functional taps.
 - The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana(urban):** to ensure Housing for All by 2024.

11

MIGRATION

- 1) As per the 2011 census, there are 450 million (38% of the population) internal migrants in India.
- 2) The World Bank report titled 'Migration and Development Brief' mentions that nearly 40 million internal migrants are affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic.
- 3) According to census 2011:
 - a) Rural to Urban migration was 20.5 million
 - b) Rural to Rural migration was 53.3 million.
 - c) Urban to Urban migration was 14.3 million
 - d) Urban to rural was 6.2 million
- 4) **Key Source States:** Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh.
- 5) **Key Destination States:** Delhi, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab and Karnataka.
- 6) **Female Migration:** Out of the total internal migrants, 7 percent are women (Census of India 2001).
 - a) **Marriage made up for 46 % of the total migrations in India**, of which 97 % are women. (2011 Census)
- 7) **Education:** About 1.77% people migrated for education.
- 8) According to the 2011 Census, the number of internal migrants rose to 453.6 million.
- 9) **Report on Domestic Migration** released by Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) – There is **reduction in Domestic Migrant Numbers** by about 12% from 45.57 crore to 40.20 crore in 2023 with migration rate **dropping from ~38% to an estimated ~29% in 2023**.
- 10) Migrant workers comprise nearly 60% of occupationally vulnerable workers (outside agriculture) who face problems of low wages, high risk jobs and the fear of being fired.
- 11) **Street vendors:** accounts for 14% of the total (non-agricultural) urban informal employment in the country. **Largest concentrations of street vendors** are in the cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Ahmedabad.
- 12) About 80% of seasonal migrant children in major destinations lack access to education near work sites.
- 13) **Migration and covid-19:** Construction and agriculture witnessed major job losses during pandemic lockdown.
 - a) **The worst-hit migrant is "vulnerable circular migrants."** Almost 200 million of them were affected by the Covid-19 disruption.
- 14) **Migration in India 2020-2021' Report: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation**
 - a) **All-India migration rate** was 28.9%, with 26.5% and 34.9% migration rate in rural and urban areas respectively.
 - b) Reverse migration during the pandemic led to higher rates of unemployment agglomeration in rural areas, which caused rural distress.
 - c) **Females** recorded a **higher share of migration rate** as compared to males.
 - i) Among females, the highest level of migration rate was seen at 86.8% for marriage.
- 15) **Case studies-**
 - a) A survey amongst **Jharkhand's particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs)** showed that Aadhar disrupted their PDS supply and pension payments.
 - b) **Kattupaniya nomadic tribe of Kerala** got an Aadhar card and free ration only post Covid-19.
- 16) **INITIATIVES:**
 - a) **Portability of welfare schemes-**
 - i) **'One Nation One Ration Card'** was launched for the nation-wide portability of ration cards.
 - ii) For LPG connection, under the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana 2.0 (PMUY 2.0)** migrants will not be required to submit ration cards or address proof.

iii) **Ayushman Bharat Scheme**- beneficiary can visit any empanelled public or private hospital in India to avail cashless treatment.

b) Others:

i) **Project Changathi**: This is a literacy scheme by Kerala government targeted at migrant children for them to learn Malayalam.

ii) **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (PM GKRA)**: To boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to villages, in the wake of COVID-19 Outbreak.

17) **SUPREME COURT JUDGEMENT ON MIGRATION CRISIS DURING LOCKDOWN**: The apex court took suo-motu cognisance of the plight of the migrant workers at the height of the exodus last year and **gave following directions**:

- A **government cannot "abdicate" its duties to feed migrant workers**, especially during a pandemic, merely because they did not have ration cards. All states and Union territories (UT) to implement the '**One Nation One Ration Card**' scheme.
- Provide **food to non-ration cardholders**, **increase allocation of subsidised food** and allow a migrant to access dry ration from **anywhere under the National Food Security Act**.
- The work on the portal for the **National Database for Unorganised Workers (NDUW Project)** has to be completed by July 31, 2021.

18) **CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR SOCIAL SECURITY**:

- Concurrent list item 23**- social security and insurance, employment and unemployment.
- Article 41**- provision for securing right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment.
- Article 42**- provision for securing just and humane conditions for work and maternity relief.

19) **SDG target 1.3** calls for the implementation of nation- wide social protection floors.

20) **UNIVERSAL SOCIAL SECURITY: RECENT GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES**:

- Code on Social Security, 2020** - The Code on Social Security, 2020 is a code to **amend and consolidate the laws relating to social security** with the goal to extend social security **to all employees** and workers either in the **organised or unorganised** or any other sectors.
 - It subsumes laws like **Employees' Compensation Act, 1923, The Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948, The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972** etc.
- Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM)**, a voluntary and contributory pension scheme to ensure old age protection for Unorganised Workers.
- National Pension Scheme for Traders, Shopkeepers and Self-Employed Persons**, a voluntary and contributory pension scheme for traders, shopkeepers.
- e-SHRAM Portal** to create a national database of Unorganized Workers, including migrant workers, to facilitate delivery of social security schemes to the workers.

12

MANUAL SCAVENGING

12.1 FACTS:

- 1) A staggering **97.25%** are from communities classified as **Scheduled Caste**. Other include Scheduled Tribes, communities classified as other backward classes.
- 2) **Nearly 472 deaths due to manual scavenging** had been recorded from 2016 to 2020. **Between 2018 and 2023, 339 people lost lives** while cleaning sewers and septic tanks in India, as per Union social justice and empowerment ministry.
- 3) **UP is among states with the highest number of dry and service latrines.**
- 4) **According to the House Listing and Housing Census 2011**, states such as Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal account for **more than 72 percent of the insanitary latrines** in India.
- 5) **2013 Act bans 'hazardous cleaning'** of septic tanks and sewer pits, without 'protective gear' and 'other cleaning devices'. But it does not define what the 'protective gear' is.
- 6) **Government report - As on 31.01.2024, out of 766 districts in the country, 729 districts have reported themselves as manual scavenging free.**

12.2 SUPREME COURT JUDGEMENT: SAFAI KARAMCHARI VS UNION OF INDIA, 2014:

- 1) The court termed manual scavenging a clear violation of among other statues **Article 17, which abolishes untouchability.**
- 2) **The Supreme Court** remarked: **"In no country, people are sent to gas chambers to die. Every month four to five people lose their lives in manual scavenging"**.
- 3) **SC Judgement: In 2014**, a Supreme Court order made it mandatory for the government to identify all those who died in sewage work since 1993 and provide **Rs. 10 lakh** each as compensation to their families.

12.3 INITIATIVES:

- 1) **LEGISLATION: The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013-** Superseding the 1993 Act, the 2013 Act goes beyond prohibitions on dry latrines, and outlaws all manual excrement cleaning of insanitary latrines, open drains, or pits.
- 2) **Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge** - It was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. As a "challenge" for all states to **make sewer-cleaning mechanised by April 2021.**
- 3) **NAMASTE scheme** is launched to **promote 100% mechanization**, specially cleaning of sewers, septic tanks.
- 4) desilting of drains, garbage lifting, sludge handling, solid and medical waste disposal
- 5) **Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan (2002)** - a coalition of various community-based organizations from 13 states—started a campaign to encourage manual scavengers to voluntarily leave the practice.
- 6) **Best practice- In Thiruvananthapuram, a group of engineers** has designed a spider-shaped robot called **"BANDICOOT"** that cleans manholes and sewers with precision.

13

HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

- 1) **Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2024:** India at **105th** position out of 127 countries. It was at 111th position in 2023.
 - a) **Undernourished children - 13.7%**
 - b) **Stunted children - 35.5%**
 - c) **Wasted children - 18.7% (highest globally)**
 - d) **Child mortality rate - 2.9%**
- 2) As per **National Family Health Survey (NFHS) – 5**, **57% women in the age group of 15 – 49 are anemic**
- 3) **Stunting: one in every 3 children is stunted.**
- 4) The IFPRI acknowledges that only **45% of child mortality is due to hunger or undernutrition.**
- 5) **Malnourishment: One in every 3 children is malnourished.**
- 6) **Overweight: 2% of children under the age of five years.**
- 7) **Exclusive breastfeeding** among infants 0-5 months of age: **58%.**
- 8) **India loses 4% of GDP and 8% of productivity due to different forms of malnutrition.**
- 9) The bane of child and maternal malnutrition is responsible for **15 per cent of India's total disease burden.**
- 10) **FOOD FORTIFICATION –**
 - a) More than **2/3rd of Indian population** suffers from deficiencies of vitamins or nutrients.
 - b) **Every 1 Rupee spent on fortification results in 9 Rupees** in benefits to the economy.
 - c) **The '+F' logo** has been notified to identify fortified foods.
 - d) Food fortification **success** = Fortification has been specifically successful for **iodized salt**; **71%** of the world's population has access to iodized salt.
- 11) **The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 2: Zero hunger)** aims to **end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030**, making sure all people – especially children – have access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round.
- 12) Study by **the Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS)** in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, etc. found that **Dalit children were being given less amount of food** compared to upper caste children.
- 13) Among 22 states surveyed, **only 9 states have shown a declining trend in malnourishment.**
- 14) As per **UN- Food and Agriculture Organization report**, **194 million people go hungry every day** in India, comprising about **23% of the world's undernourished population.**
- 15) India **wastes about 7% of its total annual food production** and **almost 30% of the fruits and vegetables** because of inadequate warehousing facilities and cold storages.
- 16) **Africa South of the Sahara and South Asia** are the regions with the highest hunger levels and are most vulnerable to future shocks and crises.
- 17) **Global Food Policy Report 2022 on climate change and food system:** By 2030, India's food production could drop 16% and the number of those at risk for hunger could increase 23%.

INITIATIVES:

- 1) **National Food security Act 2013:** access to food is a legal right.
- 2) **Zero Hunger Programme**
- 3) **Eat Right India Movement**
- 4) **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana**
- 5) **Mission POSHAN 2.0**, to address malnutrition in children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- 6) **Mid-day meals** in primary and upper primary schools, along with **Anganwadis.**
- 7) **Anaemia Mukh Bharat** strategy
- 8) **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme.**
- 9) **Mission Indradhanush**
- 10) **Nutrition Smart Village: To 75 villages** across India with the objectives of promoting nutritional awareness, education and behavioural change, harnessing traditional knowledge and implementing nutrition-sensitive agriculture.
- 11) **STATE INITIATIVE: Jharkhand government's SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation Malnutrition and Anaemia Reduction) campaign:** It aims to identify anaemic women and malnourished children. The campaign also tries to target **Primarily Vulnerable Tribal Groups.**

14

URBANISATION

14.1 FACTS:

- 1) India's population stood at 1210 million in 2011, with an urbanisation level of 31.1% (**Census of India 2011**).
- 2) In 2021, Urban population in India is **377 million (31% of total population)**. Expected to increase to **870 million people by 2050**.
- 3) Urban population (% of total population) in India was reported at **36.36 % in 2023, according to the World Bank**.
- 4) **Number of Persons Living in Urban Areas: Over 75% of the urban population of the country is in 10 States:** Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Kerala.
- 5) **High-Scoring States: Goa is the most urbanised State** with 62.2% urban population.
- 6) **Low-Scoring States:** Bihar, Odisha, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh continue to be at a lower level of urbanisation than the national average.
- 7) In urban areas, around **75% families are nuclear functionally**, but joint in property ownership and 21% joint families.
- 8) Together, **India, China and Nigeria will account for 35%** of the projected growth of the world's urban population between 2018 and 2050.
- 9) Additional **6 lakh buses needed to accommodate 50% public transport needs in next 30 years – KPMG study**.
- 10) **Overcrowding** in urban areas. Example- in **Mumbai, 90% people live in 1 or 2 rooms**.
- 11) **6% urban population live in slums. 18% households** are in slum areas. Nearly **23% children** live in slums in urban areas.
- 12) **Urban Heat Island effect** raising temperatures by around **10 degrees**.
- 13) **Best practices to deal with urban heat islands-**
 - a) Community initiative – **Paani ATMs** can be seen in almost every village in drought hit **Marathwada** region of Maharashtra.

14.2 INITIATIVES:

Schemes/Programmes Related to Urban Development:

- 1) Smart Cities
- 2) AMRUT Mission
- 3) Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban
- 4) HRIDAY
- 5) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban

Government Initiatives for Slum Dwellers/Urban Poor:

- 1) Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana
- 2) Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (self-reliant India)

14.3 International commitments:

- 1) The **SDGs Goal 11** promotes urban planning as one of the recommended methods for achieving sustainable development.
- 2) The **UN-Habitat's New Urban Agenda** was adopted at Habitat III in 2016.
- 3) **Paris Agreement:** India's National Determined Contributions (NDCs) includes the goals to reduce the emission intensity of the **country's GDP by 33 to 35% by 2030 from 2005 level**.
- 4) **'Cities Alive: Designing Cities that Work for Women' Report by UNDP-** stresses the need to directly engage women in decision-making processes, across all aspects of urban planning and development.

15

HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX

- 1) The **World Bank** has recently released the report titled '**The Human Capital Index 2020 Update: Human Capital in the Time of COVID-19**'.
- 2) Globally, a child could expect to attain an average of **56% of her potential productivity** as a future worker.
- 3) **Regional variation**: a child born in a low-income country has an HCI of 0.37 as compared to 0.7 in a high-income country.
- 4) Human capital is **slightly higher among girls** than boys in most countries.
- 5) **In the context of India**: World Bank's Human Capital Index (HCI) 2020
 - a) **India ranked at 116th** from among **174 countries** as compared to 115 out of 157 countries in 2018.
 - b) India's HCI **score increased** to 0.49 from 0.44 in 2018.
 - c) India is **among the only two countries** (other being Tonga), where **child survival rates are higher for girls than for boys**.
 - d) India experienced a **13-percentage-point decline in stunting rates** for children under 5 from 48 percent in 2010 to **35 percent in 2020**.

Rural and Human Development Linkage World Bank (2019) in an evaluation of the scheme found that **PMGSY roads had a positive impact on human capital formation** in rural India:

- 1) Share of babies delivered at home decreased by 30 percent in connected habitations;
- 2) Vaccination among children under the age of four increased by 15 percentage points, with boys and girls benefiting equally.
- 3) Children in middle or high school had 0.7 more years of schooling in 2017;

16

BRAIN DRAIN

16.1 FACTS:

- 1) The **number of Indians who renounced their citizenship in the first half of 2023 surpassed the total number in the entire 2020**.
 - a) Until **June 30 2023**, a total of **87,026 renounced their Indian citizenship**. The number was 85,256 in 2020.
- 2) **Around 8 lakh students travel abroad for higher education every year**.
- 3) According to a **Morgan Stanley report**, "**35,000 Indian Entrepreneurs of High Net worth LEFT India between 2014-2020**, as NRI/Immigrants. **India ranked No 1 in EXODUS IN THE WORLD**."
- 4) **India loses \$2 billion a year because of the emigration of computer experts to the U.S. (UNDP ESTIMATES)**
- 5) **Indian students going abroad for their higher studies costs India a foreign exchange outflow of \$10 billion**.
- 6) As per the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** data, **around 69,000 Indian trained doctors worked in the UK, US, Canada and Australia in 2017**. In these four countries, 56,000 Indian-trained nurses were working in the same year.
- 7) According to a report more than half of the first rankers of standard 10th and 12th board exams between 1996-2015-the **brightest Indian minds-migrated abroad** and are still employed there.

16.2 GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO PREVENT BRAIN DRAIN:

- 1) **Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) Programme**- aims to communicate to the youth population of the country the excitements of creative pursuit of science and attract talent to the study of science at an early stage and build the required critical human resource pool for strengthening and expanding the Science & Technology system and R&D base.
- 2) **The Ramanujan Fellowship**: It is meant for brilliant Indian scientists from outside India to take up scientific research positions in India.
- 3) **The Ramalingaswamy Fellowship**: It provides a platform to scientists who are willing to return and work in India.
- 4) **Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)**- aims at improving the research ecosystem of India's Higher Educational Institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world.
- 5) **Impactful Policy Research in Social Science (IMPRESS)** - aims to provide a research roadmap to address policy challenges pertaining to society and so, social science areas.
- 6) **Study in India and Stay in India**: The MHRD's move to 'Study in India' is focused on helping students who have returned to India because of the pandemic.

17

YOUTH IN INDIA 2022 REPORT

1) FACTS:

- a) **Decline in Youth Population**: The youth population is expected to increase initially but will start to decline in the latter half of 2011-2036 period.
- b) **The total youth population increased** from 222.7 million in 1991 to 333.4 million in 2011 and is projected to reach to **345.5 million by 2036**.
- c) **Proportion of youth to the total population had increased** from **26.6% in 1991 to 27.9% in 2016** and then projected to start a downward trend and to reach **22.7 % by year 2036**.
- d) **Scenario in the States**: States such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh are projected to see a higher elderly population than the youth by 2036.
- e) **Bihar and Uttar Pradesh experienced a rise in proportion of youth population** to total population till 2021 and then it is expected to start declining.

SCHEMES RELATED TO THE YOUTH:

- 1) **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana**- aims to enable a large number of Indian youths to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood.
- 2) **YUVA**: Prime Minister's Scheme for Mentoring Young Authors
- 3) **National Youth Policy-2014**
- 4) **National Skill Development Corporation**
- 5) **Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram Scheme**
- 6) **Weekly Iron Folic Acid Supplementation Programme (WIFSP)**
- 7) **Scheme for Promotion of Menstrual Hygiene** among Adolescent Girls.

18

GAMING DISORDER

- 1) The **World Health Organization** categorised gaming disorder as a **mental health condition** in 2018.
- 2) According to Pew, **97 percent of teen boys and 83 percent of girls play games** on some kind of device.
- 3) A 2019 survey by the U.S.-based Limelight Networks found that **India had the second largest number of gamers after South Korea**.
- 4) It is **higher among male students** (8.8%) than female students (0.8%).
- 5) **India recorded about 455 million online gamers in the year 2023**.
- 6) **66% of gamers in India were from non-metro cities, with 43% of them being first-time earners in the 18-30 age group**
- 7) **Lockdown brought spotlight on online gaming addiction**.

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CRIME IN INDIA REPORT 2023

- 1) **Report Published:** By National Crime Records Bureau.
- 2) **Overall crime:** The number of total crimes reported in India in 2023 was 445.9 per 100,000 people.
- 3) **Decrease in Crime Rate:** The crime rate (crime incidence per 100,000 of population) in India has decreased **from 487.8 in 2020 to 445.9 in 2021 to 445.9 per 1 lakh people**.
- 4) **States crime rate:** The states with the highest crime rates in India are **Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Delhi, and Bihar. Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of crimes**.
- 5) **Urban Vs Rural:** The crime rate in urban areas is higher than the crime rate in rural areas.
- 6) **Reason for decrease in Crime Rate:** increased police presence, improved law enforcement, and greater public awareness of crime.
- 7) **Safest City: Kolkata emerged as** the safest city in India for the third consecutive year, Pune (Maharashtra) and Hyderabad (Telangana) secured the second and third positions, respectively.
- 8) **Rise in Cyber Crimes:** Cybercrime reporting surged by 24.4%, totalling 65,893 cases, a significant surge from 52,974 cases in 2021.
- 9) **Suicides and Causes:** In 2022, India witnessed a significant surge in suicides, totalling over 1.7 Lakh cases, reflecting a concerning increase of 4.2% compared to 2021.
- 10) **Crimes Against Women:** A total of 4,45,256 cases of crime against women were reported in 2022, marking a 4% increase from 2021. Dominant categories included 'Cruelty by Husband or His Relatives,' 'Kidnapping & Abduction of Women,' and 'Assault on Women with Intent to Outrage Her Modesty.'
- 11) **Crimes Against Senior Citizens:** rose by 9.3% from 2021.
- 12) **Crimes Against Children:** showed an increase of 8.7% compared to 2021.



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22nd Aug: Essay 02:00–5:00 PM

23rd Aug: GS 1 02:00–5:00 PM

GS 2 07:30–10:30 PM

24th Aug: GS 3 02:00–5:00 PM

GS 4 07:30–10:30 PM

25th Aug: Reserved 9 AM–5 PM

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Litmus Test-01 *Evaluation + F2F

Date/Day	9 AM to 12 PM	2 PM to 5 PM
18-July Fri	_____	Paper-I (Essay)
19-July Sat	Paper-II (GS-I)	Paper-III (GS-II)
20-July Sun	Paper-IV (GS-III)	Paper-V (GS-IV)

Litmus Test-02 *Only F2F/Evaluation

Date/Day	9 AM to 12 PM	2 PM to 5 PM
01-Aug Fri	_____	Paper-I (Essay)
02-Aug Sat	Paper-II (GS-I)	Paper-III (GS-II)
03-Aug Sun	Paper-IV (GS-III)	Paper-V (GS-IV)

Litmus Test-03 *CSE PYQ - Only F2F

Date/Day	9 AM to 12 PM	2 PM to 5 PM
08-Aug Fri	_____	Paper-I (Essay)
09-Aug Sat	Paper-II (GS-I)	Paper-III (GS-II)
10-Aug Sun	Paper-IV (GS-III)	Paper-V (GS-IV)

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