

GOVERNMENT POLICIES & INTERVENTIONS

India needs comprehensive sexuality education

- **In News-** Understanding sexual consent is important not only to learn about violation and abuse, but also to maintain healthy relationships.

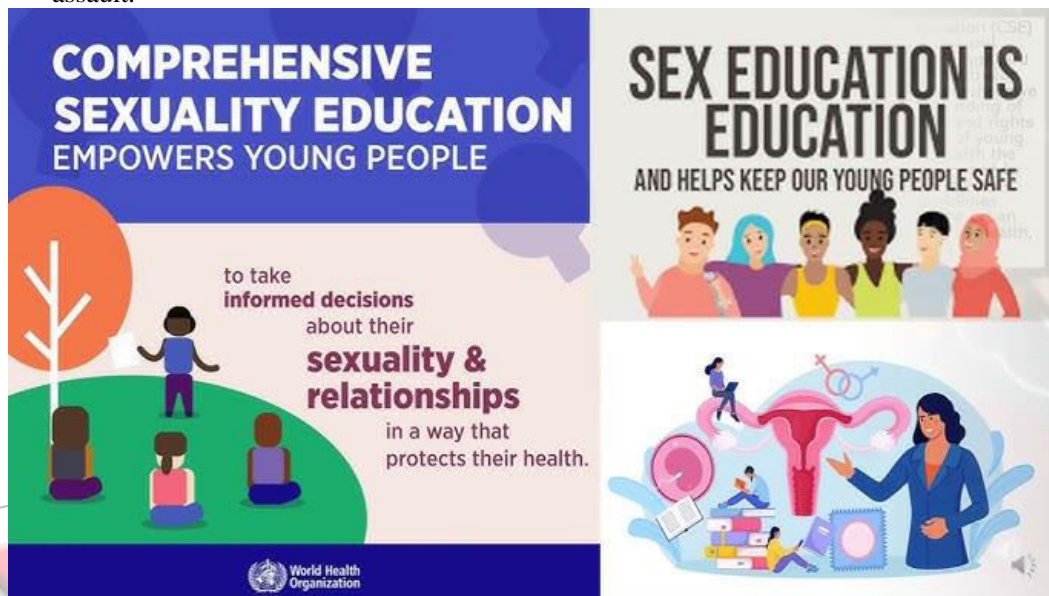
Younger population & issue of Sexual Offence

❖ **India's younger population:**

- In India, every fifth person is between the ages of 10 and 19 & has the greatest proportion of adolescents in the world (approximately 253 million), according to UNICEF.

❖ **Cases of Sexual Offence of Children:**

- According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 51,863 cases were reported under The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act in 2021; of them, 33,348 or 64% were of sexual assault.



Challenges

❖ **Data on sex education:**

- The research has found that more than 90% of students think sex education in school curriculum is important. 60% also stated that they had exposure to sex education in school.
- However, only 45% said that they had received appropriate sex education.

❖ **Ill approach of State governments:**

- Several State governments and certain sections of society in India have adopted an ostrich-like approach to comprehensive sexuality education.
- The governments that it sexualises children, they have either watered down the existing programmes or withdrawn them on the grounds that they violate “Indian values”.

❖ **Patriarchal mindset:**

- Traditional values are often shaped by patriarchal and hierarchical social structures. Mass media often propagates such values.
- All this negatively affects young adults of all genders.

❖ **No education to Teachers:**

- Teachers reported that they lacked the knowledge to talk about diverse topics with the existing programmes.

❖ **Women & sexual awareness:**

- The victims of poor sexual awareness are primarily women. It is women who suffer most because of social taboo, menstrual issues, or unwarranted pregnancies.
- Women also have lower awareness and knowledge around contraception, sex, pregnancy, and reproductive health.
- They also had little control over their sexual lives and decision making.

Significance of sex education:

❖ **Early awareness:**

- The UN global guidance recommends starting comprehensive sexuality education from the age of five along with formal education.
- This means that young children will be taught about their bodies, emotions, the basic principles of consent, and how to deal with violence, bullying or abuse.
- ❖ **Rights and sexuality:**
 - According to the World Health Organization (WHO), with comprehensive sexuality education, young people will be better informed of their rights and sexuality, and will be more likely to engage in sexual activity later.
- ❖ **Sex & health:**
 - Studies have shown that sexually aware students are most likely to say no to unprotected sex.
 - Through sex education, teenagers can be taught the positive and negative sides of sex. They can learn about sexually transmitted disease, teenage unintended pregnancy, and emotional effects of sex.
- ❖ **Sexual consent:**
 - Understanding sexual consent is important not only to learn about violation and abuse, but also to maintain healthy relationships.
- ❖ **Reducing the intimate partner violence:**
 - The ramifications of a comprehensive sexuality education are far-reaching, especially in the matter of intimate partner violence.
- ❖ **Educating women on sex:**
 - When women are educated and aware of sexual wellness, they make better reproductive decisions. This means lesser teenage pregnancies, child mortality, or sexually transmitted infections.

Suggestions

❖ **United Nations (UN) recommendations:**

- An effective approach would be comprehensive sexuality education, which, according to the United Nations (UN), is a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality.

❖ **State's role:**

- In India, the responsibility of sexuality education is vested with the State governments.
- Each State has the freedom to develop creative curriculums within the framework suggested by the UNFPA.

Comprehensive sexuality education by schools:

- NCRB data show that it is necessary for schools to impart comprehensive sexuality education not only to children, but also to parents and caregivers.

❖ **Capacity-building of teachers:**

- The UNESCO 2021 Global Status Report on 'the journey towards comprehensive sexuality education' says that capacity-building of teachers is critical as the curriculum requires non-intuitive participatory pedagogies.

❖ **For parents:**

- The sex education advice for parents is that they educate themselves first. They should also let go of their inhibitions and reservations.

❖ **Regional languages to discuss the concept of sexual consent:**

- While the concept of sexual consent is evolving through criminal jurisprudence, the term itself may have been borrowed from English or other Western languages.
- With the non-English language speaking population becoming substantial, an explicit creation of vocabulary in regional languages to discuss the concept of sexual consent and its nuances is urgently required.

Way ahead

❖ **Age of consent:**

- In the context of POCSO cases, the Madras, Delhi, and Meghalaya High Courts along with the Chief Justice of India have highlighted the frequent criminalisation of consensual adolescent relationships and have asked the government to consider reducing the age of consent.

❖ **Sex Education:**

- UNESCO has highlighted a government-NGO case study from Jharkhand, where a school-based programme, Udaan, which began as an Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health programme led by

the State AIDS Control Society, got mainstreamed into the Education Department, as a model of commitment to scale up comprehensive sexuality education.

- The State Council of Educational Research and Training informed the Kerala High Court that awareness about POCSO would be included in the curriculum from 2024-25.
- With the relationship between sexual health and human rights being complex, non-linear and interrelated, it is hoped that the curriculum is holistic and not simply related to legalities.

PRELIM FACT

1. Amitabh Kant Committee

- News-The 14-member committee chaired by former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, submitted its report to Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri recently.

About:

- The Amitabh Kant committee was tasked by the Government with suggesting ways to revive stalled real estate projects.
- The report by the committee acknowledged the financial stress of real estate developers but recommended no direct support.
- The report has essentially suggested that all stakeholders — developers, financiers and land authorities — take “haircuts” to make the stalled projects financially viable.

What does haircut mean in finance?

- A haircut is the lower-than-market value placed on an asset when it is being used as collateral for a loan.
- The size of the haircut is largely based on the risk of the underlying asset. Riskier assets receive larger haircuts.
- It is centered on safeguarding the interests of homebuyers. Giving homebuyers a clear path to possession of their homes will boost consumer confidence in the real estate sector.
- The panel has proposed measures to improve the Internal Rate of Return of projects and attract funding.
- The panel has also recommended allowing co-developers to come in to help, which will distribute the financial burden of the stalled projects.
- While the report addresses the overall financial viability of projects, it does not provide specific mechanisms or direct financial support to address developers’ immediate liquidity challenges, which could be a significant concern.
- While the report proposes several measures, the success of these recommendations depends on their timely implementation and effective execution.

2. NASA's Crew-7 Mission

- Context-Recently, NASA and Space X have launched Crew-7 Mission.
- The name of the spacecraft responsible for carrying astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS).

About Crew 7 Mission:

- The mission includes four astronauts from the USA, Denmark, Russia and Japan.
- Crew-7 is the seventh routine mission to the International Space Station for Elon Musk's Space X. The first mission happened back in 2020.
- The crew will spend six months aboard the orbital platform, and will carry out science experiments.

International Space Station (ISS)

- It is a space station, or a habitable artificial satellite, in Low Earth Orbit (approximately 250 miles above Earth).
- It was the brainchild of former US President Ronald Reagan, who in 1984 proposed building a permanently inhabited spacecraft in cooperation with a few other countries.
- The first piece of the International Space Station was launched in 1998 into space onboard a Russian rocket.
- NASA and its partners around the world finished the space station in 2011.
- The ISS is one of the most ambitious international collaborations in human history.
- Nations involved: The ISS programme is a joint project between five participating space agencies: NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada).
- The ownership and use of the space station are established by intergovernmental treaties and agreements.

Significance

- They are helpful for gathering accurate scientific information, particularly for biological research.
- They support several scientific investigations into the various facets of space.
- Studying the effect of prolonged space travel on the human body.

3. Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23

- News -An Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent departed to participate in Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23 in Cairo (West) Air Base, Egypt.

Background

- Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23 is a biennial multilateral tri-service exercise.
- The exercise was initially conceptualized as a bilateral biennial training exercise between the US and Egypt during the Camp David Accord of 1977.
- The first edition of the Exercise was conducted in the year 1980 in Egypt. From 1995 onwards the Exercise was expanded for participation by other nations.

Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23

- Participants: 34 countries will participate in Exercise BRIGHT STAR- 23 including the United States of America, India, Saudi Arabia, Greece and Qatar.
- The Exercise will consist of a large number of training activities focused on combating emerging unconventional threats and enhancing regional partnerships amongst participating nations aimed at maintaining world peace.
- Indian Participation: This is for the first time that IAF is participating in this exercise. The Indian Air Force contingent will consist of five MiG-29, two IL-78, two C-130 and two C-17 aircraft.
- The Indian Army is being represented by a contingent from 23 JAT Battalion.

4. Rozgar Mela

- News-Prime Minister Modi distributed more than 51,000 appointment letters to newly inducted recruits under Rozgar Mela (Employment Fair).
- Rozgar Mela is an employment strategy to fast-track the meeting of job seekers and employers. It is an event where a number of employers and job seekers come together for the purpose of applying and interviewing for jobs.
- The Rozgar Mela is expected to act as a catalyst in further employment generation and provide meaningful opportunities to the youth for their empowerment and participation in national development.

Unemployment in India

- Unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of unemployed persons among the labor force.
- Labor force refers to the part of the population which supplies or offers to supply labor for pursuing economic activities for the production of goods and services and, therefore, includes both employed and unemployed persons.
- According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2017-18, 6.1% of India's labor force and 17.8% young people aged between 15-29 years are unemployed.

Reasons of unemployment

- Growth of job creation is not in sync with the GDP growth: It is entirely possible for a country's GDP to rise either with very little new job creation or even with actual job losses. In other words, while GDP growth is a necessary condition for job creation; it is not the sufficient one.
- Slower growth in manufacturing sector: India's growth model is dependent on the service sector, which typically isn't as labor-intensive as manufacturing. The phase of manufacturing growth has generated relatively limited opportunities for well-paid employment or good jobs for those at the bottom of the education and skill ladder.

5. Self-respect marriages

- **Why in news:** The Supreme Court observed that there is no blanket ban on advocates solemnising "self-respect" marriages under Section 7(A) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955.

About self-respect marriages

- In 1968, the Hindu Marriage (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act, 1967, received the President's approval and became the law.
- This amendment modified the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, by inserting Section 7-A into it.
- However, it extended only to the state of Tamil Nadu.
- Section 7-A deals with the special provision on "self-respect and secular marriages".

- It legally recognises any marriage between any two Hindus, which can be referred to as “suyamariyathai” or “seerthiruththa marriage” or by any other name.
- Such marriages are solemnised in the presence of relatives, friends, or other persons, with parties declaring each other to be husband or wife, in a language understood by them.
- Such marriages are also required to be registered as per the law.

Aim:

- To radically simplify weddings by shunning the need for mandatory Brahmin priests, holy fire and saptapadi (seven steps).
- This allowed marriages to be declared in the presence of the couple’s friends or family or any other persons.
- The amendment was made to do away with the need for priests and rituals, which were otherwise required to complete wedding ceremonies.

ANSWER WRITING

Q The Gati-Shakti Yojana needs meticulous co-ordination between the government and the private sector to achieve the goal of connectivity. Discuss.

- PM Gati-Shakti is a transformative approach for economic growth and sustainable development. The approach is driven by 7 engines, namely: Railways, Roads, Ports, Waterways, Airports, Mass Transport, and Logistics Infrastructure.
- The approach is powered by Clean Energy and Sabka Prayas - the efforts of the Central Government, the state governments, and the private sector together - Leading to huge jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for all.

Need for the Government and the Private sector coordination:

- Improving quality and efficiency of services delivery.
- Exchange of expertise and managerial competence.
- Driving investments and Finance availability.
- Mobilisation of additional resources for activities.
- Fostering entrepreneurship and innovation and technology development.
- Ensuring optimal utilization of government investment and infrastructure.
- Cost-effectiveness and competitiveness.
- Addressing structural issues and environmental issues.
- Promote co-ordination, collaboration and cooperative development.

Way forward

- Feasibility mapping of the project needs strengthening.
- Utilization of viability gap funds to ensure financial viability of the project
- Prudent fiscal reporting and monitoring of risk allocations with all stakeholders.
- Move the PPP model to the next level of maturity with redesigning.
- The projects pertaining to these 7 engines in the “National Infrastructure Pipeline” will be aligned with PM Gati-Shakti framework.
- It will ensure Indian infrastructure’s embrace of digital technology, which will improve overall project execution and efficiency.

MCQ

1. Consider the following statements
1. The Rohingya are an ethnic group from Myanmar.
 2. India has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
 3. Refugees in India cannot be detained under the Foreigners Act, 1946.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- a) Only one
 - b) Only two**
 - c) All Three
 - d) None

2. With reference to SWAMITVA Scheme, consider the following statements:
1. The scheme focuses on providing urban property owners with legal ownership documents, enhancing land tenure security in cities and towns.
 2. It is Central Sector Scheme under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- Select the correct statements using the codes given below:
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only**
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. With reference to Sodium ion battery, consider the following statements:

1. They possess a higher capacity for contributing to global warming when compared to lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries.
2. These batteries are chosen over LFP due to sodium's relatively lower cost compared to lithium.
3. They can be discharged to zero volts, reducing transportation costs and accidents.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two**
- c) All Three
- d) None

4. Which of the following country is NOT participating in Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23?

- a) India
- b) United States of America
- c) Saudi Arabia
- d) Japan**

5. Consider the following statements with respect to Article 35A.

1. Article 35A empowered the legislature of Jammu and Kashmir to define the permanent residents of the state of J&K.
2. Article 35A falls outside the purview of the judicial review.
3. Article 35A is well defined in the original constitution.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two**
- c) All Three
- d) None

6. Picoflare Jets, sometimes seen in the news is related to?

- a. The supersonic passenger jets that could fly from New York to London in only 90 minutes
- b. The wind jets that emanate during collision of two alike cyclones
- c. The jets that emanate from structures on the Sun's corona**
- d. The jets that emanate from the northern and southern lights of Auroras

7. Consider the following statements with respect to Nabhmitra

1. It is a two-way messaging services device that uses satellite-based communication to ensure safety of the fisherman.
2. The device is developed by Department of Fisheries.

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

- a) 1 only**
- b) 2 only

- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

8. With reference to the zonal councils in India consider the following statements:

1. The Zonal Councils are the constitutional bodies.
2. The Constitution divides the country into five zones and provides a zonal council for each zone.
3. Prime minister is the common chairman of the five zonal councils.
4. Each chief minister acts as a vice-chairman of the council by rotation, holding office for a period of one year at a time.

How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) Only Three**
- d) All four

9. With reference to 'Geographical Indication (GI)', consider the following statements:

1. GI tag is valid for a period of ten years following which it can be renewed.
2. Geographical Indications are covered as a component of intellectual property rights (IPRs) under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

10. Consider the following Pairs:

| Festival | State |
|----------------------|---------|
| 1. Onam | Kerala |
| 2. Hornbill Festival | Manipur |
| 3. Ambubachi Mela | Assam |

How many of the given pairs is/are not correctly matched?

- a) Only one**
- b) Only two
- c) All Three
- d) None