DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 11-09-2024

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Sahariya tribes

Syllabus: GS-1: Indian Geography – Tribal population.

Context:

➢ *The* **Sahariya tribe***, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), resides primarily in the states of* **Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh***, with their main residential area being the* **Shahabad forest***, which extends from Rajasthan to Madhya Pradesh.*

Key Aspects:

➢ **Other Names:** *The Sahariya tribe is also known by various names like Seher, Sair, Sawar, Saor, Sahara, etc.*

➢ **Beliefs:** *They practice* **animism** *and* **Hinduism***, worshipping local deities like* **Bhavani***,* **Gond Devta***,* **Bundela Devta***,* **Soorin***, and* **Bijasur***.*

➢ **Language:** *They speak a* **Munda language** *from the Austro-Asiatic family.*

➢ **Social Structure:** *The tribe has a unique governance structure where* **all adults** *are part of a governing council, led by a* **patel***. The* **Pardhan** *acts as a societal leader.*

➢ **Economy:** *Skilled in* **gathering forest products***, they make* **catechu** *from* **Khair trees***. Farming methods include* **slash-and-burn** *cultivation along hill slopes. Their most specialized role is the* **shaman***, a religious leader who performs spiritual duties and healing.*

➢ **Living Arrangements:***Sahariya villages have quarters called* **longlongs***, inhabited by patrilineages called* **birinda***, with separate living areas referred to as* **Seharana***.*

Issues:

Recently, **172 cases of malnourished children** *have been reported in* **Baran district** *within two weeks, highlighting the tribe's ongoing struggles with poverty and health challenges.*

Samagra Shiksha Scheme

Syllabus: GS-2: Social Justice – Education sector.

Context:

➢ *BJP govt. denying funds to best-performing States for refusing NEP, contends TN CM Stalin.*

Introduction:

➢ *Centrally Sponsored Scheme launched in* **2018***.*

➢ *Integrates* **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)***,* **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)***, and* **Teacher Education (TE)** *into one comprehensive program.*

➢ *Focuses on* **holistic education** *from preschool to senior secondary levels.*

➢ *Aligned with the goals of* **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020***.*

Objectives:

➢ *Ensure* **equitable access** *to quality education for all children, especially girls, SC/ST, and children with special needs (CWSN).*

➢ *Promote* **foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN)***, digital learning, and vocational education.*

➢ *Improve* **learning outcomes***, infrastructure, and* **teacher training***.*

➢ *Support states in implementing* **NEP 2020** *goals.*

Key Components:

➢ **Pre-primary to Senior Secondary Education:**

  o *Covers education from* **preschool (age 3-6)** *to* **Grade 12***.*

➢ **Quality Interventions:**

  o *Focus on* **child-centric** *education, with* **play-based** *and* **activity-based pedagogy***.*

  o *Emphasis on* **remedial teaching** *and improving* **learning outcomes***.*

➢ **Teacher Training:**

  o *Continuous* **professional development** *for teachers.*

  o *Use of* **digital platforms** *for training (e.g., DIKSHA).*

- ➢ **Inclusive Education:**
  - o *Special provisions for **Children with Special Needs (CWSN)**.*
  - o *Focus on barrier-free education, assistive devices, and home-based education.*

- ➢ **Infrastructure Development:**
  - o *Construction of additional **classrooms**, **toilets**, **libraries**, and **computer labs**.*
  - o *Special focus on **remote areas**.*

- ➢ **Digital Learning:**
  - o *Development of **digital learning resources** and **e-content**.*
  - o *Expansion of the **DIKSHA** platform for online education.*

- ➢ **Vocational Education:**
  - o *Promotes vocational education from **Grade 9 to 12**.*
  - o *Collaboration with industries for **skill development**.*

- ➢ **Girl Child Education:**
  - o *Incentives for girls through **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs)**.*
  - o *Measures to reduce dropout rates, such as **bicycles** and **uniforms**.*

Funding Pattern:

- ➢ **60:40 ratio** *between the center and states (except northeastern states with a **90:10 ratio**).*
- ➢ *Funds allocated based on **Annual Work Plans** submitted by states.*

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- ➢ **National Achievement Survey (NAS)** *for assessing student performance.*
- ➢ *Regular **third-party evaluations** and **social audits**.*
- ➢ *Schools prepare **School Development Plans (SDPs)** for annual goals.*

Key Initiatives:

- ➢ **NIPUN Bharat Mission** *under Samagra Shiksha focuses on achieving **foundational literacy and numeracy**.*
- ➢ **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao** *initiative for girl child education.*

➢ *Expansion of* **ICT** *infrastructure for digital learning.*

➢ *State-specific initiatives like* **Pragati Path** *and* **Kalyana Path** *linked to Samagra Shiksha's objectives.*

Challenges:

➢ **Implementation gaps** *due to bureaucratic hurdles and slow fund disbursement.*

➢ **Inadequate infrastructure** *in rural and remote areas.*

➢ **Digital divide** *highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Opportunities:

➢ *Alignment with* **NEP 2020** *for achieving high-quality, inclusive education.*

➢ *Focus on* **capacity building** *for teachers and educational administrators.*

Conclusion:

➢ *The* **Samagra Shiksha Fund** *represents a shift towards holistic education reform, focusing on inclusivity, equity, and quality.*

➢ *Critical for achieving* **universal education** *goals outlined in* **NEP 2020** *through improved infrastructure, learning outcomes, and teacher training.*

Yudh Abhyas-2024

Syllabus: GS-2; International Relations

Context

➢ *India-US joint military exercise 'Yudh Abhyas 2024' begins in Rajasthan*

Overview

➢ **Exercise Name:** *Yudh Abhyas 2024*
➢ **Type:** *Bilateral Joint Military Exercise*
➢ **Participants:** *India and the United States*
➢ **Year of Inception:** *2004*
➢ **2024 Edition:** *The latest edition marks nearly 20 years of joint collaboration between the Indian Army and the US Army.*

Objectives

- **Military Cooperation:** *The primary aim is to strengthen military cooperation and understanding between the two armies.*
- **Interoperability:** *It enhances the ability of both militaries to operate in joint operations, particularly in complex, multi-dimensional environments.*
- **Tactical Training:** *It focuses on tactical-level operations and training in high-altitude warfare, counter-insurgency, and peacekeeping operations.*
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** *Training for humanitarian assistance, disaster relief operations, and peacekeeping under the United Nations mandate.*

Key Features

- **Location:** *It is alternately hosted in India and the US. The 2024 edition is expected to be held in the United States.*
- **Participants:** *Troops from both the Indian Army and the US Army, including special forces and other units depending on the exercise scenario.*
- **Scenarios:** *Typically involves joint drills, including combat exercises, disaster response drills, air-land integration, and special tactical operations.*
- **Weapons and Technology:** *A showcase of advanced weapons and military technology from both nations to improve strategic and tactical coordination.*

Significance

- ➢ **Strengthening Defense Ties:** *Yudh Abhyas is a testament to the growing defense ties between India and the US, in line with their strategic partnership.*
- ➢ **Enhancing Military Preparedness:** *Both armies gain valuable insights into each other's operational strategies and techniques.*
- ➢ **Geopolitical Importance:** *Conducted in the context of the Indo-Pacific region, it reinforces India and the US's role as key players in ensuring regional stability.*
- ➢ **Joint Combat Readiness:** *The exercise enhances joint combat readiness, which is essential for cooperative defense initiatives and potential peacekeeping missions.*

Silicosis

Syllabus: GS-3: General Science – Health issues.

Context:

- ➢ *Silicosis is in the news due to recent UK research highlighting that stricter daily limits on silica dust exposure could potentially prevent 13,000 deaths globally.*

What is Silicosis?

- ➢ *Silicosis is a* **respiratory disease** *that causes hardening and scarring of the lungs.*
- ➢ *It belongs to a broader group of lung diseases known as* **pneumoconiosis***, which are caused by inhaling various types of harmful dust particles.*

Causes

- ➢ *Silicosis is caused by inhaling* **silica dust** *or* **silica crystals***, which are commonly found in materials like soil, sand, concrete, granite, and artificial stone.*
- ➢ *Activities such as cutting, drilling, or grinding these materials release fine crystalline silica dust into the air.*

Vulnerable Areas

Industries that are particularly prone to silicosis include:

- ➢ **Construction**

- ➢ **Mining**

- ➢ **Oil and gas extraction**

- ➢ **Kitchen engineering** *(stone countertops)*

- ➢ **Dentistry**

> **Pottery and sculpting**

Exposure and Symptoms

> *Inhalation of this fine dust over time leads to silicosis, with symptoms typically appearing after* **10 to 20 years of exposure***.*
> *Workers in environments with poor safety standards are especially vulnerable. Silicosis can also lead to other severe health conditions, including* **lung cancer***.*

Treatment

> *Unfortunately, silicosis is a* **progressive disease with no cure***, making prevention through better safety measures and exposure limits crucial for saving lives.*

Status of silicosis in India

> *India has recognized the serious health risks posed by* **silicosis** *and has implemented various measures to control and prevent its spread, especially in vulnerable regions like* **Rajasthan***, where 70% of India's sandstone is produced. This includes national policies, legal interventions, and support programs.*
> *However, there are significant challenges due to the largely unorganized nature of industries such as sandstone mining.*

Case of Rajasthan: The Village of Widows

> *In* **Budhpura village***, Rajasthan, many men have died from silicosis due to years of working in sandstone mines without adequate safety measures.*
> *The* **Mine Labour Protection Campaign (MLPC)** *has identified nearly* **180 widows** *since 2014 whose husbands have died from the disease.*
> *This issue stems from small, unorganized sandstone mining operations, where laborers often lack education or protection.*

Challenges in Controlling Silicosis

> **Unorganized Sector***: Many of the sandstone mines operate on a small scale, which makes regulating them difficult. Millions of laborers work without proper protective gear, making them vulnerable to silicosis.*

> **Economic Dependency***: In areas like Budhpura, mining is often the only available livelihood, forcing workers to choose between health risks and feeding their families.*

National Programme on Elimination of Silicosis

India's **National Programme on Elimination of Silicosis** *is aligned with the* **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** *and the* **World Health Organisation's (WHO)** *Global Programme for the Elimination of Silicosis (GPES). It focuses on:*

- ➢ **Prevention***: Implementing safety measures in industries with high silica exposure, like mining, construction, and manufacturing.*

- ➢ **Surveillance and Screening***: Regular health check-ups for early detection of silicosis among workers.*

- ➢ **Treatment and Care***: Providing medical care, treatment, and rehabilitation for affected workers.*

- ➢ **Awareness and Training***: Educating workers and employers on the dangers of silicosis and safety practices.*

- ➢ **Policy and Research***: Developing and enforcing regulations to reduce silica exposure, and supporting research on the disease.*

Legal and Institutional Interventions

- ➢ **Supreme Court***: Directed the* **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** *to oversee the impact of silicosis-prone industries across India.*

- ➢ **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)***: Monitors the compensation process for silicosis victims.*

- ➢ **Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC)** *and* **Chief Secretaries of States***: Collaborate to ensure compensation distribution is timely and efficient.*

What Lies Ahead?

India can enhance its approach to silicosis control by:

- ➢ **Water suppression methods***: Using foams and mists to reduce airborne dust.*

- ➢ **Better ventilation***: Ensuring proper airflow in work environments.*

- ➢ **Personal protective equipment (PPE)***: Making PPE mandatory in high-risk industries.*

With stricter enforcement of safety measures and increased awareness, India aims to reduce and eventually eliminate silicosis in the coming years.

A study on Plastic Pollution

Syllabus: GS-3: Environmental Pollution – Plastic.

Context:

➤ *A recent study says that India has secured the top spot as biggest plastic polluter in the world, releasing 9.3 million tonnes (Mt) annually, amounts to roughly one-fifth of global plastic emissions.*

Key Findings of the Study on Plastic Pollution:

➤ **Global Plastic Emissions***:*

- o *Worldwide, 69% (35.7 Mt per year) of plastic emissions come from just 20 countries.*

- o *These countries are classified as:*

  - ▪ **4 low-income countries***,*

  - ▪ **9 lower-middle-income countries***, and*

  - ▪ **7 upper-middle-income countries***.*

➤ **Top Plastic Polluters***:*

- o **India***: The largest plastic polluter globally, releasing 9.3 million tonnes annually, which constitutes nearly one-fifth of global emissions.*

- o **Nigeria***: The second-largest emitter, releasing 3.5 million tonnes.*

- o **Indonesia***: Ranked third with 3.4 million tonnes of emissions.*

➤ **Sources of Plastic Emissions***:*

- o **Littering***: In high-income countries, plastic emissions primarily arise from littering, but most of their plastic waste is collected and disposed of properly.*

- o **Uncollected Waste***: In the Global South (including India), uncollected waste is the primary source of plastic emissions.*

- o *In India, about* **43% (22.2 Mt)** *of the unmanaged plastic waste remains as unburned debris, while* **57% (29.9 Mt)** *is burned either locally or in dumpsites.*

➤ **Waste Generation in India***:*

- o *India's per capita waste generation rate is around* **0.12 kg per day***.*

- o *Despite India's high total emissions, most of the waste is mismanaged and not collected, exacerbating the pollution problem.*

Global Plastics Treaty:

- ➢ **Background***: In 2022, more than* **175 United Nations member countries** *agreed to develop a legally binding* **Global Plastics Treaty** *by 2024, aimed at combating plastic pollution by reducing greenhouse gas emissions related to the plastic lifecycle (production, use, disposal).*

Treaty Goals:

- ➢ **Reducing Plastic Production***: Countries will set targets and deadlines to reduce plastic production.*

- ➢ **Eliminating Unnecessary Uses***: Certain uses of plastic, which generate waste, will be banned.*

- ➢ **Prohibiting Hazardous Chemicals***: Specific chemicals used in plastic production will be banned to protect health and the environment.*

- ➢ **Recycling Goals***: Recycling targets will be established to manage plastic waste effectively.*

- ➢ **Lifecycle Approach***: The treaty will address the full life cycle of plastics—from design to disposal.*

- ➢ **Vulnerable Workers***: It may take into consideration the impact on workers involved in the informal waste management sector.*

- ➢ **Chemical Testing***: The treaty may include mandates for testing chemicals in plastics to ensure safety.*

- ➢ **Regular Evaluations***: Progress will be evaluated regularly to ensure the treaty's objectives are being met.*