

GS I

SYLLABUS: ISSUES OF POVERTY.

HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 11.

News: "Why public health nutrition policies need precise targeting."

- India **ranked 105 under 'serious' category in Global Hunger Index 2024, published by European NGOs.**
- **Over 70% of child deaths in India** are linked to malnutrition — **papers published in Lancet 2024.**

Malnutrition Deaths:

- **Over 70% of child deaths in India** are linked to malnutrition — **papers published in Lancet.**
- In most cases, children don't die of malnutrition. They die from conditions that are exacerbated or are triggered by them. i.e Due to **various Nutritional factors as shown below:**
 - **Low birth weight:**
 - Caused if mother is malnourished or has experienced infectious disease during pregnancy.
 - Biggest factor for deaths related to malnutrition. (~3.5 lakh deaths in 2021)
 - **Underweight (low weight for age):** 30% children are underweight — **NHFS 5.**
 - **Wasting (low weight for height):** 20% of children — **NHFS-5.**
 - **Stunting (low height for age):** 35% — **NHFS-5.**
 - **Suboptimal Breastfeeding.**
 - **Vitamin & micronutrient deficiency:** Eg. Vitamin A (impairs vision and immunity), iron (Anaemia), iodine (Affects growth & cognition).
 - **Maternal Malnutrition:** 20% of women of reproductive age — **NHFS-5.**
 - **Over-nutrition & Obesity:** 25% of women and 24% of men are overweight — **NHFS-5.**

Initiatives:

- **POSHAN 2018: Umbrella scheme:**
 - **National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013:**
 - PDS component.
 - PM-Matru Vandana Yojana 2017.
 - Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS).
 - PM-Poshan Shakti Nirman in 2021.
 - Saksham Anganwadi 2021.
 - POSHAN 2.0.
 - **National Health Mission:**
 - Anaemia Mukta Bharat (AMB).
 - PM- Janani Suraksha Yojana.

Challenges in tackling Malnutrition:

- Only 60% of the allocated **funds** under POSHAN Abhiyan were utilised, indicating underperformance — **NITI Aayog 2021.**
- **Fund mismanagement and delays** in the ICDS program delivery — **CAG Report 2022.**
- **Inclusion errors impacting service delivery:** only 55% of children aged 6-8 months receive solid or semi-solid food and breastmilk — **NHFS-5 2019-21.**
- **Quality of services & Nutrition:** 35% of schools, under the PM-Poshan Shakti Nirman/ Mid-Day Meal Scheme did not meet the nutritional standards — **Ministry of Education survey 2022.**
- **Lack of Awareness:** only 40% of mothers are aware of the criticality of the first 1000 days of a child's life for nutrition — **NHFS-5.**

- **Limited healthcare facilities:** hinder the identification and treatment of malnutrition. Eg. only 60% of pregnant women had four or more antenatal care visits — **NHFS-5.**
- **Supply chain and logistics:** 25% of Anganwadi centers faced shortages of essential supplies — **Ministry of Women and Child Development report (2021)**
- **Data Gaps and monitoring challenges:** POSHAN Abhiyan's own dashboard (as of 2023) shows gaps in real-time data from various states.
- **Weak interdepartmental collaboration** — **NITI Aayog policy paper 2021.**
- **Insufficient funding:** nutrition-specific interventions are less than 1.5% of the total government expenditure — **Oxfam India report 2022.**

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EDUCATION

PRE-CONTEXT

NO DETENTION POLICY

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 12.

News: "Why was the no-detention policy rolled back?"

Context: The Union govt. amended the Rules of the Right to Education Act, 2009 in December 2024 to allow schools to detain students in Classes 5 criteria after a year end examination. Students will be given a second chance re-examination after two months of extra teaching.

Original Detention Policy under RTE Act 2009:

- It stipulated that "No child admitted in a school shall be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of elementary education [Classes 1 to 8]".
- The **spirit of a no-detention policy** was **to ensure that children can learn without unnecessary pressure & detention is demoralising to children.**
- Now, **no-detention policy is rolled back** and **students are given a second chance re-examination** after two months of extra teaching..

Ineffectiveness of Detention Policy:

- **No detention became no testing**, and in many schools, no teaching. It was a slippery slope.
- **States simply stopped testing in any form until Class 5, automatically promoting children** without bothering to find out if they had acquired grade-specific skills and knowledge
 - **Only 40% of Class 5 students** could read a Class 2-level text in 2022, a fall from 50% in 2018 — **ASER report 2023.**
 - **A govt. analysis of classes 10 and 12 results across 59 State and national boards** in 2023 showed that **more than 65 lakh students had failed** to clear their examinations.

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ECONOMY

PRE-CONTEXT

EXCHANGE RATE

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 12.

News: "Why is rupee weakening against dollar?"

One of the most important determinants of the supply of a currency in the market is the monetary policy of a country's central bank.

About Exchange Rate:

Evolution:

- **Par Value system till 1971:** Govt. Fixes external value.
- **Pegged Regime 1971-1992:** Rupee was pegged to US dollar.
- **LERMS (1991- 1993):** Partial Convertibility.
- **Floating Exchange Rate since 1993:**
 - India delinked itself from Fixed exchange Rate system & made it **floating exchange rate**.
 - Although exchange rate is **market determined**, **RBI can intervene as stabiliser**.
 - Mr. Manmohan Singh was the finance minister.

Types:

- **Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (REER):**
 - NEER **measures the strength of a country's currency against a weighted average of several other currencies**.
 - **If India's NEER increases**, it means the Indian Rupee has strengthened against the basket of other currencies, **making imports cheaper and exports more expensive**.
 - Increase in NEER indicates appreciation of country's currency.
- **Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER):**
 - Values of NEER is **adjusted to inflation**. This provides a more accurate picture of a country's currency competitiveness.
 - Increase in REER indicates real appreciation of country's currency.

Factors influencing Exchange Rate:

- **Interest Rates:** The RBI's interest rate decisions (Monetary Policy) significantly influence the INR. Higher rates tend to attract foreign portfolio investment (FPI), strengthening the INR.
- **Inflation:** Persistent inflation in India can erode the INR's value.
- **Economic Growth:** India's robust GDP growth has generally supported the INR, making it attractive for foreign investors.
- **Political Stability:** Relative political stability in India has been conducive to foreign investment.
- **FDI & FPI:** High levels of FDI and FPI inflows have appreciated the INR, while any capital flight can exert downward pressure.
- **Demand for Indian Goods and Services** in international market.

Note:

- **Appreciation of the Indian Rupee:** An increase in the value of the Indian rupee relative to other foreign currencies.
 - Eg: If the Indian rupee appreciates against the US dollar from ₹75 to ₹70 per USD, making imports cheaper.
- **Depreciation of the Indian Rupee:** A decrease in the value of the Indian rupee relative to other foreign currencies.
 - Eg: If the Indian rupee depreciates against the Euro from ₹80 to ₹85 per EUR, making European goods more expensive for Indian consumers.

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ENVIRONMENT

PRE-CONTEXT

FOREST COVER REPORT

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 12.

News: "Is India's forest cover growing enough?"

About Forest cover in India 2024:

- According to **India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023** **India's forest and tree cover has reached a 25% of the country's total geographical area**.
 - The increase of 25% breaks down to 22% of forest cover (7.15 lakh sq.km) and 3% of tree cover (1,289 sq. km).
 - **Bamboo cover** is also included in the tree cover.
 - **"Very dense" forests** expanded, **'Moderately dense'** and **'open' forests** have shrunk.
 - **Largest 'area' under forest and tree cover** recorded in **Madhya Pradesh** (85,724 sq. km).
 - **Largest 'increase' in forest and tree cover** was recorded in **Chhattisgarh** (684 sq. km).
 - **Losses have been recorded** in the Western Ghats and Eastern States Area and the Northeast.
- Forest Survey of India (FSI) defines **"forest cover"** as **land with tree canopy density exceeding 10% and covering at least one hectare**.
- India has augmented its **carbon sink by 2.29 billion tonnes** over 2005 levels.
- India's **Nationally Determined Contributions** towards the **Paris Agreement's targets** require it to create an additional carbon sink of at least 2.5 billion tonnes by 2030.

About IFSR reports:

- A **biennial publication** by the **Forest Survey of India (FSI)** that assesses the country's forest resources.
- Released by **MoF&CC**.
- The current report **estimated green cover using Resourcesat series** of satellites operated by the ISRO.

CAMPA Act 2016

- **Rationale:** Forest conservation Act 1980 not endorsed compensatory afforestation, so **SC ordered to form CAMPA**.
- CAMPA is a **statutory body** under CAMPA Act 2016.
- CAMPA operates under the **MoEF&CC**.
- **Provisions:**
 - Act establishes **National Compensatory Afforestation Fund (NCAF)** under **"Public Account of India"**.
 - State Compensatory Afforestation Funds under state public account.
- Creation of NCAF& SCAF Management and Planning Authorities to manage the funds.

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PYQs

GS I 2021: Examine the status of forest resources of India and its resultant impact on climate change.



GOVT. INSTITUTIONS

PRE-CONTEXT

ANIIDCO

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 7.

News: "Ministry proposes cruise terminal and high-end tourism infra on Great Nicobar."

Context: Union Shipping Ministry is making ambitious plans for high-end tourism along with a shipbuilding and repair yard on Great Nicobar Island.

About Mega Infrastructure Project in Great Nicobar:

- Promoted by **NITI Aayog**.
- Project cost outlay is **Rs. 72, 000 crore**.
- **Location:** Great Nicobar (southernmost island of A&N archipelago).
- **Proposed infrastructure:**
 - Construction of a trans-shipment port at proposed at **Galathea Bay**.
 - Greenfield airport.
 - Tourism and township project.
 - Solar and gas-based power plants.
- **Proponent for implementation of project** is **ANIIDCO**.

About: Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO):

- **Incorporated** under Companies Act 1956 in 1988, but not established under the Act, so it is **not a Statutory body**.
- **Objective of ANIIDCO:**
 - To develop and commercially exploit natural resources for the balanced and environment friendly development of the territory.
- **Main activities of ANIIDCO:**
 - Trading of petroleum products, Indian made foreign liquor and milk.
 - Managing tourism resorts.
 - Infrastructure development for tourism and fisheries.

Issues with proposed Mega Infrastructure Project:

- Solar power plant construction will involve **razing nearly a million trees in about 130 square km of rainforest**.
- **Displacement of the 'Shompen tribe'** (semi-nomadic forest dwelling tribes of Great Nicobar).
- **Ecologist view:** Tribes may be few in number but **their knowledge of the forests is supreme. They are happy, joyful**. They have their own understanding of the universe. Let them remain the way they are. **If they need us, they will reach out.**

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POLITY

PRE-CONTEXT

NATIONAL SECURITY ACT 1980

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 1.

News: "New Governor suggests use of NSA in Manipur."

About National Security Act 1980:

- The National Security Act, passed by Parliament in 1980 and amended since, **empowers the state to detain individuals without formal charges or trials**.
- **Grounds for detention:**
 - **A person is taken into custody** to prevent them from acting in any manner prejudicial to **"the security of the state" or for "maintenance of the public order", affecting relations of India with foreign powers**.
 - An individual can be **detained without charges for a maximum of 12 months**.
 - In special circumstances, **they can be held for 10 to 12 days without being informed of the charges**.
 - **The law takes away an individual's constitutional right:**
 - **i.e., to be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours** when in police custody.
 - Also **prevents the detained person from moving a bail application** before a criminal court.
 - **It's an administrative order** passed by the **Divisional Commissioner or the District Magistrate**, not by police based on specific allegations or law violations.
 - **Even if a person is in police custody**, the District Magistrate can slap NSA against them.
 - **If a person is granted bail or acquitted by a trial court**, they can be detained under the NSA.
 - **Article 22(3):** provides that the rights available to an arrested person will not be applicable in case of preventive detention
 - **Safeguard against NSA:**
 - **Article 22(5): All detained persons have the right to an effective representation before an independent advisory board of three members**, chaired by a former **high court judge**.
 - The **writ of habeas corpus is the available remedy** under the Constitution against the state's power to detain people under the NSA.

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Thank you!