

CIVIL SERVICE DIGEST (CSD-Daily)

November 20, 2018

Literacy levels in rural India suffer due to migration, finds UNESCO study

- UNESCO report says that 80% of seasonal migrant children in seven cities lacked access to education and 40% were likely to end up in work
- Literacy levels in rural households of India dip with seasonal migration, the UNESCO global education monitoring report 2019 has observed, bringing out the educational challenges thrown up by migration.
- “In India, 10.7 million children aged 6 to 14 lived in rural households with a seasonal migrant in 2013. About 28% of youth aged 15 to 19 in these households were illiterate or had not completed primary school, compared to 18% of the cohort overall,” says the report.
- “About 80% of seasonal migrant children in seven cities lacked access to education near work sites, and 40% are likely to end up in work rather than education, experiencing abuse and exploitation.”
- The report says that the construction sector absorbs the majority of short-term migrants. “A survey in Punjab state of 3,000 brick kiln workers in 2015-16 found that 60% were inter-State migrants.

- Between 65% and 80% of all children aged five to 14 living at the kilns worked there seven to nine hours per day. About 77% of kiln workers reported lack of access to early childhood or primary education for their children,” it says.
- Inter-State migration rates have doubled between 2001 and 2011. “An estimated 9 million migrated between States annually from 2011 to 2016,” the report says.
- It also warns of the negative impact on education for children who are left behind as their parents migrate: “Test scores were lower among left-behind children aged 5-8.”
- The report, however, acknowledges that India has taken steps to address the issue. “The Right to Education Act in 2009 made it mandatory for local authorities to admit migrant children. National-level guidelines were issued, allowing for flexible admission of children, providing transport and volunteers to support with mobile education, create seasonal hostels and aiming to improve coordination between sending and receiving districts and states,” it says.
- The report shows there is only one urban planner for every 1,00,000 people in India, while there are 38 for every 1, 00,000 in the United Kingdom.

Industrial Park Rating System to be released by Commerce Ministry

On November 19, 2018 The Union Minister for Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, released the report prepared by the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, on Industrial Park Rating System.



- i. It is a part of centre's vision to make India a **5 Trillion Dollar economy** out of which 20 per cent is expected to be generated from industries.
- ii. It would help increase competitiveness of industries and promotion of the manufacturing sector as it would assess the parks against global standards.
- iii. As industrial parks play a major role in the growth of the industrial sector in India, this will help enhance the competitiveness of industries in India.
- iv. Thus good infrastructure will bring down the cost of doing business in India and provide a conducive environment for investments in industrial sectors.

About the IPRS:

- i. The system will be developed by the ministry to assess industrial parks in the country based on **four** pillars. They are:
 - Internal and external infrastructure, connectivity, environment and safety management, and business support services.
- ii. The system would assess **200** such parks on several parameters such as sewage effluent and treatment; and water treatment.

Background:

There are over 3,000 industrial parks in the country in sectors including engineering, software, food processing and chemicals.

SC Refuses To Entertain PILs Seeking FIR Based On #MeToo Revelations

- The Supreme Court on Monday declined to entertain two petitions seeking to take cognisance of statements of sexual harassment made during the #MeToo campaign and prosecution of the accused.
- A Bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices S.K. Kaul and K.M. Joseph said that if there was any cognisable offence, there was a procedure to be followed under the law.
- “The issues highlighted would be considered by the court in the event an aggrieved person moves the court. The writ petition is, therefore, not entertained on the aforesaid ground. The same is, accordingly, dismissed,” the Bench said.

#MeToo movement

- The Me Too movement (or #MeToo movement), with many local and international alternatives, is a movement against sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- #MeToo spread virally in October 2017 as a hashtag used on social media in an attempt to demonstrate the widespread prevalence of sexual assault and harassment, especially in the workplace.
- It followed soon after the sexual misconduct allegations against Harvey Weinstein.

- Tarana Burke, an American social activist and community organizer, began using the phrase “Me Too” as early as 2006, and the phrase was later popularized by American actress Alyssa Milano, on Twitter in 2017.
- Milano encouraged victims of sexual harassment to tweet about it and “give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem”.
- This was met with success that included but was not limited to high-profile posts from several American celebrities, including Gwyneth Paltrow, Ashley Judd, Jennifer Lawrence, and Uma Thurman.

Govt, RBI step back from the brink, signal uneasy truce

- The tension between the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appeared to have defused for the time being with both agreeing to settle for a middle ground at the end of an over nine-hour board meeting on Monday.
- The most contentious issue between the central bank and the Finance Ministry was the RBI’s capital. Now, while the RBI has agreed to set up an expert committee on the economic capital framework (ECF), its mandate is restricted to future earnings and not the existing reserves.
- “The board decided to constitute an expert committee to examine the ECF, the membership and terms of reference of which will be jointly determined by the Government of India and the RBI,” the central bank said in a statement.
- Sources indicate there were detailed presentations by the RBI on economic capital as well as other issues such as the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework.

- On the PCA, the Board for Financial Supervision (BFS) of the RBI will review the norms and take a call if some of the parameters like net non-performing asset (NPA) ratio could be relaxed so that some of the banks come out of the PCA. There are 11 public sector banks out of 21 that are on the PCA.
- The BFS consists of the Governor, four Deputy Governors and a few other board members. Another significant decision was relief to micro, small and medium enterprises — the sector which is badly hit by the twin blows of demonetisation and patchy implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Economic capital framework

- The concept of economic capital has gained significance especially after the global financial crisis in 2008.
- The crisis exposed many central banks in the world to multiple risks, which forced many of them US Federal Reserve, Bank of England and European Central Bank besides sovereign governments to pump in liquidity, buy securities and expand their balance sheets to boost confidence in the financial system and to ensure that critical institutions did not collapse.
- Economic capital framework refers to the risk capital required by the central bank while taking into account different risks.
- The economic capital framework reflects the capital that an institution requires or needs to hold as a counter against unforeseen risks or events or losses in the future.
- The framework the government is talking about is basically about how much capital RBI needs for its operations and how much of the surplus it should pass on to the government.

Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework

- PCA is a process or mechanism to ensure that banks don't go bust.
- Under it, RBI has put in place some trigger points to assess, monitor, control and take corrective actions on banks which are weak and troubled.
- It was first introduced after global economy incurred huge losses due to failure of financial institutions during 1980s-90s.
- According to latest PCA framework, banks to be placed under it are assessed on three parameters viz. Capital ratios, Asset Quality and Profitability.
- Indicators to be tracked for these three parameters are CRAR (Capital to Risk weighted Assets Ratio)/Common Equity Tier I ratio, Net NPA (non-performing assets) ratio and Return on Assets (RoA) respectively.
- If banks breach of any risk threshold mentioned above, it results in invocation of PCA against them.
- RBI enforces these guidelines to ensure banks do not go bust and follow prompt measures to put their house in order.
- It had tightened its PCA framework in April 2017 to turn around lenders with weak operational and financial metrics,
- Depending on the risk thresholds set in PCA rules, banks placed under it are restricted from expanding number of branches, staff recruitment and increasing size of their loan book.
- Other restrictions include higher provisions for bad loans and disbursal only to those companies whose borrowing is above investment grades.

Non Performing Assets (NPA)

- The assets of the banks which don't perform (that is – don't bring any return) are called Non Performing Assets (NPA) or bad loans. Bank's assets are the loans and advances given to customers. If customers don't pay either interest or part of principal or both, the loan turns into a bad loan.

- According to RBI, terms loans on which interest or installment of principal remains overdue for a period of more than 90 days from the end of a particular quarter is called a Non-performing Asset.
- However, in terms of Agriculture / Farm Loans; the NPA is defined as – For short duration crop agriculture loans such as paddy, Jowar, Bajra etc. if the loan (installment/interest) is not paid for 2 crop seasons, it would be termed as an NPA. For Long Duration Crops, the above would be 1 Crop season from the due date

Ease of Doing Business Grand Challenge

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, launched the Ease of Doing Business Grand Challenge at an event in Lok Kalyan Marg in New Delhi
- The objective of this challenge is to invite innovative ideas based on Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Big Data Analytics, Blockchain and other cutting-edge technology to reform Government processes. The platform for the Grand Challenge is the Startup India Portal.

Description:

- The Prime Minister said that there have been improvements in the ease of doing business and the ranking has further improved from previous years but he seeks suggestions and improvement programs from the think tanks and Industrial bodies.
- India now ranks first in South Asia due to continuous efforts from Union and State Govts.

- The reforms initiated were keeping in mind the Predictable Transparent Policies and Policy Driven Governance.
- So it is necessary to reduce human intervention in the processes, and increase the use of modern and digital technologies. He said that a work culture based on this, will further promote policy driven governance.

Definition:

- Ease of doing business is an index published by the World Bank. It is an aggregate figure that includes different parameters which define the ease of doing business in a country.
- In the EODB index, 'higher rankings' (a lower numerical value) indicate better, usually simpler, regulations for businesses and stronger protections of property rights.

AirSewa 2.0 web portal

The Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Commerce & Industry and Minister of State for Civil Aviation, launched the upgraded version of AirSewa 2.0 web portal and mobile app in New Delhi

About:

- Airsewa enables travelers to submit grievances and seek information on air travel in India.
- It is an initiative by MoCA (Ministry of Civil Aviation)

- The government had launched Air Sewa's maiden version in 2016 as a part of its initiative, 'Digital India', to address customers' grievances on a digital platform.

Features:

- The second version of the app and web portal will allow flyers to register their complaints via social media using the hashtag 'AirSewa'
- The need was felt for development of an upgraded version of AirSewa to provide a superior user experience with enhanced functionalities.
 - Major improvements include features such as secure sign-up and log-in with social media, chatbot for travellers support, improved grievance management including social media grievances, real-time flight status and details flight schedule.
- The upgrade and improved version of AirSewa operates through an interactive web portal as well as through a mobile app for both android and iOS platforms
 - The web portal and application will help to capture air travellers' feedback for policy interventions.
 - The focus is now on improving the quality of services so that passengers who are travelling have a safe and comfortable experience.
- Further upgrades of AirSewa are also being planned which would include DigiYatra registration, airport maps, BHIM payment integration and grievance escalation and transfer.

Baba Kalyani led Committee

- The Baba Kalyani led committee constituted by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry to study the existing SEZ policy of India submitted its report to the

Union Minister for Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Suresh Prabhu, in New Delhi on 19 November.

Objective

- The objectives of the committee were to evaluate the SEZ policy and make it WTO compatible, suggest measures for maximizing utilisation of vacant land in SEZs, suggest changes in the SEZ policy based on international experience and merge the SEZ policy with other Government schemes like coastal economic zones, Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor, national industrial manufacturing zones and food and textiles parks.

Suggestions

- The current environment of manufacturing competitiveness and services has to undergo a basic paradigm shift.
- The success seen by services sector like IT and ITES has to be promoted in other services sector like health care, financial services, legal, repair and design services.

Kilogram Redefined. The Metric System Overhaul Is Complete

The 26th meeting of the General Conference on Weights and Measures (CGPM) was held during November 13-16 2018 at Palais des Congrès, Versailles, France. CGPM is the highest international body of the world for accurate and precise measurements. The 26th CGPM meeting was very special and historic as the members have voted for the redefinition of 130 years old “Le grand K – the SI unit of kg” in terms of the fundamental Planck’s constant(h). The new definitions will come into force on 20 May 2019.

New changes made:

- The International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM), the main executive body of CGPM has the responsibility of defining the International System of Units (SI). This revision of the SI is the culmination of many years of intensive scientific cooperation between the National Metrology Institutes (The national Physical Laboratory for India) and the BIPM. The dissemination of SI units for the welfare of society and industries in the country is the responsibility of Legal Metrology, Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India.
- Out of five draft resolutions the revision of the International System of Units and the definition of timescales are the important. The most important is the resolution on the revision of International System of Units.
- The definition of the seven base units namely, second, metre, kilogram, ampere, Kelvin, mole and candela has been changed from being linked to artefacts to being based on the fundamental constants on nature. Notably, the definition of kilogram has been changed from being the mass of prototype sanctioned by the 1st CGPM held in Paris in 1889 and deposited at the BIPM to the Planck constant which is a physical constant.
- Likewise, the definition of metre has been changed to link it to the speed of light. There is a change in definition of time also. The change in the definition will result in uniform and worldwide accessible SI system for international trade, high- technology manufacturing, human health and safety, protection of environment, global climate studies and the basic science under-pinning these.
- The units are expected to be stable in the long term, internally self-consistent and practically realisable being based on the present theoretical description of nature at the highest level.

- The International prototype of kilogram (IPK) is kept at the BIPM, Paris and serves as the international standard of kilogram. It is made of 90% platinum and 10% iridium and is a cylinder of 39 mm diameter and 39 mm height. Replicas of the IPK are made of the same material and used at BIPM as reference or working standards and national prototype of kilogram (NPK), kept at different National Metrology Institutes (NMIs). NPK-57, kept at CSIR- National Physical Laboratory, is sent periodically to BIPM for calibration.
- NPK further is being utilised through transfer standards of mass to provide unbroken chain of traceability for dissemination of mass through Legal Metrology to the user industries, calibration laboratories etc. The precise and accurate measurements help country in the production of international quality products and help commerce through elimination of the technical barrier to trade.
- Kibble balance is a self-calibrating electromechanical balance and provides the measurements of mass, traceable in terms of electrical parameters and provides linkage of macroscopic mass to the Planck constant(h). NPL-UK, NIST-USA, NRC- Canada, PTB-Germany etc. Have successfully developed Kibble balance for 1 kg with an uncertainty of measurement in order of 10^{-8} . NPL-India, in association with Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India is looking forward for the development of 1 kg Kibble balance.
- The advantages of Kibble balance would be that the NPK need not to be sent to BIPM for calibrations and the accuracy and stability of Kibble balance is very high which is very important where low weights with high accuracies are essential, for example in pharmaceuticals and biotechnologies.
- After the kilogram's definition is changed officially- on 20th May, 2019, also known as World Metrology Day- most people will never notice the difference.

It would not change baking ingredients on a kitchen scale, or even have an effect on the tons of goods shipped globally every day.

Indo-Russian Joint Exercise

Opening ceremony for the Tenth Indo-Russian Joint Exercise, *INDRA 18* scheduled from 18 November to 28 November 2018 was held on 19 November 2018 at Babina Military Station.

Objective:

- The aim of the exercise is to practice joint planning and conduct to enhance interoperability of the two armies in the peace keeping and enforcement environment under the aegis of United Nations.
- The eleven day exercise focuses upon training on enhancing team building and tactical level operations in a counter insurgency environment in semi urban terrain.

Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercis (SIMBEX- 2018)

25th edition of SIMBEX, “Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise” was held onboard INS Sahyadri at Visakhapatnam

Importance of the exercise:

- Naval cooperation through SIMBEX underscores the shared commitment of both nations to security, safety and freedom of navigation and overflight in the global commons.

- The 25th edition of SIMBEX is the largest in terms of complexity, weapon firings and maritime geography.
- Singapore and India are like minded countries that share similar outlook towards preserving freedom of sea following rules and norms laid down in UNCLOS.
- To mark the historic occasion and as a symbol of growing trust and comfort levels between the two navies, a special Logo was also released.
- The occasion was also utilised to simultaneous release Special Postal Cover and Singaporean Postage Stamp on SIMBEX.