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## News Analysis (21 Jul, 2021)

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### Provisions of 97th Amendment Struck Down: SC

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#### Why in News

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Recently, the **Supreme Court (SC)** upheld a 2013 judgment of the Gujarat High Court and struck down certain provisions of the **Constitution (97<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Act, 2011**.

It gave a major boost for **federalism** as the **97<sup>th</sup> Amendment shrank the exclusive authority of States** over its **co-operative societies**, a sector considered as a massive contributor to the economy.

#### Co-operatives

- According to the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**, a **cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs** and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.
- There are **many types of cooperatives** such as Consumer Cooperative Society, Producer Cooperative Society, Credit Cooperative Society, Housing Cooperative Society and Marketing Cooperative Society.
- The **United Nations General Assembly** had declared the year **2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives**.
- India is an agricultural country and laid the foundation of **World's biggest cooperative movement in the world**.

Recently, a separate '**Ministry of Co-operation**' has been created by the Central Government to give a new push to the cooperative movement.

#### Key Points

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**Issue:**

- Part IXB, introduced into the Constitution through the **97<sup>th</sup>** Amendment, **dictated the terms for running co-operative societies.**
- The provisions in the Amendment, **passed** by Parliament **without getting them ratified by State legislatures** as required by the Constitution.
- It went to the extent of **determining the number of directors** a society should have or their **length of tenure** and even the **necessary expertise required** to become a member of the society.

**Other Major Provisions of the 97<sup>th</sup> Amendment**

- The word “**cooperatives**” was added after “**unions and associations**” in **Article 19(1)(c)** under **Part III of the Constitution**. This enables all the citizens to form cooperatives by giving it the status of fundamental right of citizens.
- A new **Article 43B** was added in the **Directive Principles of State Policy** (Part IV) regarding the “promotion of cooperative societies”.
- **Central Government's Argument:**
  - It justified that the government was **injecting ‘professionalism’ and autonomy** into the functioning of the societies.
  - **Lack of accountability** by the members has **led to poor services and low productivity.**
  - Even **elections are not held on time.** Co-operatives **need to run on well-established democratic principles.**

- **SC's Ruling:**
  - **Exclusive Legislation of States:**
    - The constitution has been described as **quasi-federal** in that, so far as legislative powers are concerned, though **there is a tilt in favour of the Centre vis-à-vis the States** given the **federal supremacy** principle.

**Quasi-federalism** means an intermediate form of state between a unitary state and a federation.
    - However, within their own sphere, the **States have exclusive power to legislate on topics reserved exclusively to them.**
    - **Part IX B**, which consists of **Articles 243ZH to 243ZT**, has “significantly and substantially **impacted**” **State legislatures’ “exclusive legislative power” over its co-operative sector under Entry 32 of the State List.**
    - The court pointed out how **Article 243ZI** makes it clear that a **State may only make law on the incorporation, regulation and winding up of a society** subject to the provisions of Part IXB of the 97<sup>th</sup> Amendment.
  - **Not Ratified by the States:**
    - It held that the 97<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment **required ratification by at least one-half of the state legislatures as per Article 368(2)** of the Constitution, since it dealt with an entry which was an exclusive state subject (co-operative societies).

Under **Article 368(2)**, Parliament can amend the Constitution by passing a Bill with a **special majority**.
    - Since such ratification was not done in the case of the 97<sup>th</sup> amendment, it was liable to be struck down.
  - **Upheld the Validity of Provisions related to Multi State Cooperative Societies:**
    - It did not strike down the portions of Part IXB of the Amendment concerning **‘Multi State Co-operative Societies (MSCS)’ due to the lack of ratification.**
    - When it comes to MSCS with objects not confined to one State, the **legislative power would be that of the Union of India** which is contained in Entry 44 List I (**Union List**).
    - It is declared that **Part IXB of the Constitution is operative only insofar as it concerns multi-State cooperative societies** both within the various States and in the Union Territories.

## **Lists to Differentiate Legislative Powers**

There are **three Lists** which provide for distribution of legislative powers (**under 7<sup>th</sup> Schedule to the Constitution**):

- **Union List (List I)** - It contains **98 subjects (originally 97)** and comprises the **subjects which are of national importance** and admit of uniform laws for the whole of the country.  
Only the Union Parliament can legislate with respect to these matters e.g. Defence, Foreign Affairs, Banking, Currency, Union Taxes, etc.
- **State List (List II)** - It contains **59 subjects (originally 66)** and comprises **subjects of local or State interest**.  
It lies within the legislative competence of the State Legislatures, viz. Public Order and Police, Health, Agriculture, etc.
- **Concurrent List (List III)** - It contains **52 subjects (Originally 47)** with respect to which; both Union Parliament and the State Legislature have concurrent power of legislation. The Concurrent List (not found in any federal Constitution) was to serve as a device to avoid excessive rigidity to a two-fold distribution.  
It is a '**twilight zone**', as for not so important matters, the States can take initiative, while for the important matters, the Parliament can do so.

**Source: IE**

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## **Director of Inquiry for Lokpal**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, in a **RTI** Reply, it has been revealed that the **Centre is yet to appoint a director of inquiry, more than two years after the Lokpal came into being.**

### **Key Points**

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- **About the Director of Inquiry:**
  - As per the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, there shall be a Director of Inquiry, **not below the rank of Joint Secretary** to the Central Government.
  - As per the provisions contained under **Section 20 (1) (b)** of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, **complaints in respect of public servants are referred by the Lokpal to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)** for a preliminary inquiry.
  - The non-appointment of director of inquiry again reflects the **lack of political will** for strengthened Lokpal in India.

- **About Lokpal:**

- A Lokpal is an **anti-corruption authority or ombudsman who represents the public interest.**

India is a **signatory to the United Nations Convention against Corruption.**

- The concept of an ombudsman **was borrowed from Sweden.**
- The Lokpal, the **apex body to inquire and investigate graft complaints against public functionaries**, came into being with the appointment of its chairperson and members in **March 2019.**
- The **First Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) of India (1966– 1970)** recommended the setting up of two special authorities designated as **‘Lokpal’ and ‘Lokayukta’ for the redressal of citizens’ grievances.**

The **Lokpal** is responsible for enquiring into corruption charges at the **national level** while the **Lokayukta** performs the same function at the **state level.**
- The Lokpal has **jurisdiction over all Members of Parliament and central government employees** in cases of corruption.
- Apart from this, Lokpal **can also inquire into anti-graft complaints regarding any member of an institution** which is wholly or partially financed by the central government or controlled by it.
- Presently, **Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose** is the chairperson of the Lokpal.
- Lokpal is a **multi-member body** that consists of **one chairperson and a maximum of 8 members.**

- **Issues Regarding Lokpal:**

- Lokpal is **not free from political influence** as the appointing committee itself consists of members from political parties.

The **selection committee for Lokpal** is composed of the Prime Minister who is the Chairperson; Speaker of Lok Sabha, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Chief Justice of India or a Judge nominated by him/her and One eminent jurist.

- The appointment of Lokpal can be manipulated in a way as there is **no criterion to decide who is an ‘eminent jurist’ or ‘a person of integrity’.**
- The biggest lacunae is the **exclusion of the judiciary from the ambit of the Lokpal.**
- The Lokpal is **not given any constitutional backing** and there is **no adequate provision for appeal against the Lokpal.**
- The complaint against corruption **cannot be registered after a period of seven years** from the date on which the offence mentioned in such a complaint is alleged to have been committed.

## **Way Forward**

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- In order to tackle the problem of corruption, the institution of the ombudsman should be strengthened both in terms of **functional autonomy and availability of manpower**.
- Moreover, Lokpal and Lokayukta must be **financially, administratively and legally independent** of those whom they are called upon to investigate and prosecute.
- There is a **need for a multiplicity of decentralized institutions** with appropriate accountability mechanisms, to avoid the concentration of too much power, in any one institution or authority.
- **Greater transparency, empowering Right to Information Act, strong Whistleblower protection regime** are required along with a **morally resound leadership** that is willing to subject itself to public scrutiny.

**Source: TH**

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## **Kapu Community Reservation**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the **Andhra Pradesh government has announced 10% reservation for the Kapu community and other Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)** for appointments in the initial posts and services in the State government.

This reservation is extended in accordance with the **Constitution (103<sup>rd</sup> Amendment) Act, 2019**.

### **Key Points**

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#### **About Kapu Community:**

- The Kapus are primarily an **agrarian community based in the Andhra-Telangana region**.
- It is believed that they **migrated from the Gangetic plains**, probably from Kampilya (near Ayodhya) thousands of years ago.
- They entered what is present-day Telangana and, after clearing the forests along the **banks of the Godavari, settled down to farming**.
- The Kapu community is **demanding inclusion in the 'Backward Castes' category** "like they were before independence".
- The first major protest for the inclusion of the **Kapus in the 'Backward Castes' was held in 1993**.

A government order was then issued for their inclusion in 'Backward Castes'. However, it was not honoured.

### **Other Backward Classes**

- Other Backward Classes (OBC) is a collective term used by the Government of India to classify castes which are educationally or socially disadvantaged.
- It is one of several official classifications of the population of India, along with General Class, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SCs and STs).
- The OBCs were found to comprise 52% of the country's population by the Mandal Commission report of 1980, and were determined to be 41% in 2006 when the National Sample Survey Organisation took place.
- **National Commission for Backward Classes** is a constitutional body under Article 338B of the Constitution under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- **Guidelines for EWS Reservation:**
  - Persons who are **not covered under the existing scheme of reservations** for SCs, STs and Socially and Educationally Backward Classes and whose **gross annual family income is below Rs 8 lakh** are to be identified as EWS for the benefit of reservation.
  - The **income includes income from all sources** i.e. salary, agriculture, business, profession etc. for the financial year prior to the year of application.
  - The term **family** for this purpose will include the person who seeks benefit of reservation, his or her parents and siblings below the age of 18 years as also his or her spouse and children below the age of 18 years.
- **103<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act:**
  - It **introduced an economic reservation (10% quota) in jobs and admissions** in education institutes for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) by amending **Articles 15 and 16.**
    - It inserted Article 15 (6) and Article 16 (6).
  - It was enacted to promote the welfare of the poor not covered by the 50% reservation policy for SCs, STs and Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC).
  - It **enables both Centre and the states** to provide reservation to the EWS of society.

- **Status of EWS Reservation:**

- 10% EWS reservation breaches the 50% limit to reservation in employment opportunities (set by **Indra Sawhney case 1992**) by the Central Government.
- Government's stand is that though ordinarily 50% is the rule but same **will not prevent the amendment of the Constitution itself** in view of the existing **special circumstances** to uplift the members of the society belonging to economically weaker sections.
- Currently, **the matter is in the Supreme Court**, where it recently referred the petitions challenging the 103<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019 to a five-judge constitution bench, saying it involves '**substantial questions of law**'.
- According to **Article 145 (3) of the Constitution**, at least five judges need to hear cases that involve 'a substantial question of law as to the interpretation' of the Constitution, or any reference under Article 143, which deals with the power of the President of India to consult the Supreme Court.
- The Supreme Court bench consisting of at least five judges is called the **Constitution bench**.

**Source: TH**

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## **India Inequality Report 2021: Oxfam**

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### **Why in News**

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The report titled "**India Inequality Report 2021: India's Unequal Healthcare Story**" released by **Oxfam India** shows that the socio-economic inequalities seep into the health sector and disproportionately affect health outcomes of **marginalised communities** due to the absence of **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**.

The report suggested that the states which are attempting to reduce existing inequalities and with higher expenditure on health had lower confirmed cases of **Covid-19**.

### **Key Points**

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- **About the Report:**

- It provides a comprehensive analysis of the health outcomes across different socioeconomic groups to gauge the level of health inequality that persists in the country.
- The findings are primarily based on secondary analysis from rounds 3 and 4 of the **National Family Health Survey** and various rounds of the **National Sample Survey**.

- **Finding of the Report:**

- **Performance of Different Groups:** The general category performs better than SCs and STs; Hindus perform better than Muslims; the rich perform better than the poor; men are better off than women; and the urban population is better off than the rural population on various health indicators.

The Covid-19 pandemic has further exacerbated these inequalities.

- **Performance of States:** The **states that have for the past few years been reducing inequalities**, such as inequalities to access to health between the general category and SC and ST populations, **have less confirmed cases of Covid** – such as Telangana, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan.
  - On the other hand, **states that have had higher GDP expenditure on health**, such as Assam, Bihar and Goa, have **higher recovery rates of Covid cases**.
  - **Kerala invested in infrastructure** to create a multi-layered health system, designed to provide first-contact access for basic services at the community level and expanded primary healthcare coverage to achieve access to a range of preventive and curative services.
- **Rural-Urban Divide:** It was highlighted during the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, when rural areas witnessed a shortage of tests, oxygen and hospital beds.
- **Doctor-person Ratio:** The National Health Profile in 2017 recorded one government allopathic doctor for every 10,189 people and one state-run hospital for every 90,343 people.
- **Hospital Beds:** The investment in public health infrastructure is so little that the number of beds in the country has actually come down, from 9 beds per 10,000 persons in the 2010 Human Development Report, to only 5 beds per 10,000 persons today.

India also **ranks the lowest in the number of hospital beds per thousand population among the BRICS nations** at 0.5. It is lower than lesser developed countries such as Bangladesh (0.87), Chile (2.11) and Mexico (0.98).
- **Women Literacy:** While women's literacy has improved across social groups over the years, SC and ST women lag behind the general category by 18.6% and 27.9%, respectively.
  - There exists a gap of 55.1% between the top and bottom 20% of the population in 2015-16.
  - Though the female literacy rate among Muslims (64.3%) is lower than all religious groups, inequality has reduced over time.

- **Sanitation:** As far as sanitation is concerned, 65.7% households have access to improved, non-shared sanitation facilities in the general category while SC households are 28.5% behind them and ST are 39.8% behind them.
  - While 93.4% of households in the top 20% have access to improved sanitation, only 6% have access in the bottom 20 % — a difference of 87.4%.
- **Immunisation:** The immunisation in ST households at 55.8% is still 6.2% below the national average, and Muslims have the lowest rate across all socio-religious groups at 55.4%.
  - The rate of immunisation of girls continues to be below that of the male child.
  - More than 50% of children still do not receive food supplements in the country.
- **Life Expectancy:** Life expectancy based on wealth is 65.1 years for the bottom 20% of the households, while it is 72.7 years for the top 20%.
- **Antenatal Care:** Percentage of mothers who have received full antenatal care declined from 37% in 2005-06 to 21% in 2015-16.
  - The share of institutional deliveries in India has increased from 38.7% in 2005-06 to 78.9% in 2015-16.
- **Infant Mortality Rate:** Overall improvement in Infant mortality rate (IMR) is not equal across social groups. Dalits, Adivasis and OBCs have higher IMR as compared to the general category.
  - IMR for Adivasis is 44.4 which is 40% more than the general category and 10% more than the national average.

## Recommendations

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- The right to health should be enacted as a **fundamental right** that makes it obligatory for the government to ensure equal access to timely, acceptable, and affordable healthcare of appropriate quality and address the underlying determinants of health to close the gap in health outcomes between the rich and poor.
- The free vaccine policy should adopt an **inclusive model** to ensure that everyone, irrespective of their gender, caste, religion or location i.e. people living in hard-to-reach areas, gets the vaccine without any delay.
- Increase health spending to 2.5 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to ensure a more equitable health system in the country; ensure that union budgetary allocation in health for SCs and STs is proportionate to their population.
- Regions with higher concentration of **marginalised population should be identified** and public health facilities should be established, equipped and made fully functional as per the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS).
- Widen the ambit of insurance schemes to include out-patient care. The major expenditures on health happen through out-patient costs as consultations, diagnostic tests, medicines, etc.

- **Institutionalize a centrally-sponsored scheme** that earmarks funds for the provision of free essential drugs and diagnostics at all public health facilities.
- **Regulate the private health sector** by ensuring that all state governments adopt and effectively implement Clinical Establishments Act or equivalent state legislation.
- **Extend the price capping policy** introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic to include diagnostics and non-Covid treatment in order to prevent exorbitant charging by private hospitals and reduce catastrophic out-of-pocket health expenditure.
- **Augment and strengthen human resources and infrastructure** in the healthcare system by regularising services of women frontline health workers.
- **Establishing contingency plans** for scenarios such as the second wave of the pandemic.
- **Inter-sectoral coordination** for public health should be boosted to address issues of water and sanitation, literacy, etc. that contribute to health conditions.

## Conclusion

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- To stabilise and equalise this inequality, universal health coverage should be supported strongly by the public sector.
- Persistent underfunding of the public health system, especially primary health care and inadequate health infrastructure in India remain to be addressed by the government even after devastating second wave. Otherwise, health emergencies will only aggravate existing inequalities and work as a detriment for the poor and the marginalised.

**Source: TH**

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## National Health Mission

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### Why in News

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Recently, the Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare informed the **Rajya Sabha** that **National Health Mission (NHM)** supported health system reforms have resulted in development of resilient health systems.

### Key Points

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## About:

- NHM was launched by the government of India in 2013 subsuming the **National Rural Health Mission** (Launched in 2005) and the **National Urban Health Mission** (Launched in 2013).
- The main programmatic components include **Health System Strengthening in rural and urban areas** for - **Reproductive-Maternal- Neonatal-Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A)**, and **Communicable** and **Non-Communicable Diseases**.
- The NHM envisages achievement of **universal access to equitable, affordable & quality health care services** that are accountable and responsive to people's needs.

## GOALS

- Reduce MMR to 1/1000 live births
- Reduce IMR to 25/1000 live births
- Reduce TFR to 2.1
- Prevention and reduction of anemia in women aged 15-49 years
- Prevent and reduce mortality and morbidity from communicable, non-communicable, injuries and emergency diseases
- Reduce household out-of-pocket expenditure on total health care expenditure
- Reduce annual incidence and mortality from Tuberculosis by half
- Reduce prevalence of Leprosy to <1/10000 population and incidence to zero in all districts
- Annual Malaria incidence to be <1/1000
- Less than 1percent microfilaria prevalence in all districts
- Kala-Azar Elimination by 2015, <1case per 10000 population in all blocks
- **Support to States & Union Territories (UT):**
  - **Health Facilities:**

NHM support is provided to States/UTs **for setting up of new facilities** as per norms and **upgradation of existing facilities** for bridging the infrastructure gaps based on the requirement posed by them.
  - **Health Services:**

NHM support is also provided **for provision of a range of free services** related to maternal health, child health, adolescent health, family planning, **universal immunisation programme**, and for major diseases such as **Tuberculosis**, vector borne diseases like **Malaria**, **Dengue** and **Kala Azar**, **Leprosy** etc.

- **Major Initiatives Supported Under NHM:**
  - Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK).
  - Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK).
  - Implementation of **Free Drugs and Free Diagnostics Service Initiatives.**
  - PM National Dialysis Programme.
  - Implementation of **National Quality Assurance Framework** in all public health facilities.
  - **Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) & Tele-consultation services** are also being implemented to improve access to healthcare particularly in rural areas.
  - Ayushman Bharat.
  - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

## Achievements of NHM

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- **Improvement in Health Indicators:**
  - In the 15 years of implementation, the NHM has **enabled achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** for health.  
The MDGs have been superseded by the Sustainable Development Goals.
  - It has also led to **significant improvements in maternal, new-born, and child health indicators**, particularly for maternal mortality ratio, **infant and under five mortality rates**, wherein the **rates of decline in India are much higher than the global averages** and these declines have accelerated during the period of implementation of NHM.
- **Growth in Public Health Facilities:**
  - NHM adopts a health system **approach and targets to build a network for public health facilities with Health & Wellness Centres at the grassroot level and District Hospitals**, with robust referral linkage, to offer Comprehensive primary and secondary care services to citizens.
  - NHM has not only **contributed to increase in the institutional capacities** for service delivery but also has **led to development of capacities for targeted interventions** of the various National Programmes under the NHM.
- **Equitable Development:**
  - There was also a sustained focus on the health of tribal populations, those in Left Wing Extremism areas, and the urban poor.
  - A more recent effort at ensuring equity in access and use, is the Aspirational district initiative, in which 115 districts across 28 states, with weak social and human development indicators have been identified for allocation of additional resources and capacity enhancement to catch up with more progressive districts.

- **National Ambulance Services:**
  - At the time of launch of NRHM (2005), ambulance networks were non-existent.
  - So far, **20,990 Emergency Response Service Vehicles are operational under NRHM.**
  - Besides **5,499 patient transport vehicles are also deployed**, particularly for providing “free pickup and drop back” facilities to pregnant women and sick infants.
- **Human Resource Augmentation:**
  - NHM supports states for engaging service delivery HR such as doctors, nurses and health workers and also implements the **world’s largest community health volunteer programme through the Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs).**
    - More than **10 lakhs ASHAs and ASHA facilitators are engaged under NHM.**
  - NHM has also **supported states to acquire staff** with skills in public health, finance, planning and management to plan and implement interventions, freeing up clinical staff to deliver health services.
- **Health Sector Reforms:**
  - NHM enabled the design and implementation of **reforms specifically related to Governance, Procurement and Technology.**
- **Addressing high Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE):**
  - Recognising the need for reducing the current high levels of OOPE, and that, almost 70% of the OOPE is on account of drugs and diagnostics, the Free Drugs and Free Diagnostics Services Initiatives have been implemented under the NHM.
  - The **National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM)** and the **Essential Diagnostics Lists** have been notified and are periodically updated to include more essential drugs based on new initiatives undertaken.

**Source: PIB**

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## **SMILE Scheme**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has formulated a scheme “**SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise**”.

It includes a subscheme - ‘**Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in Begging**’.

### **Key Points**

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- **About:**
  - It is a **new Scheme after the merger of existing Schemes** for Beggars and Transgenders.
  - Scheme provides for the use of the existing shelter homes available with the State/UT Governments and Urban local bodies for rehabilitation of the persons engaged in the act of Begging.
    - In case of non-availability of existing shelter homes, new dedicated shelter homes are to be set up by the implementing agencies.
- **Focus:**
  - The focus of the scheme is extensively on **rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counselling, basic documentation, education, skill development, economic linkages** and so on.
  - It is estimated that an **approximate 60,000 poorest persons would be benefited** under this scheme for leading a life of dignity.
- **Implementation:**

It will be implemented with the support of State/UT Governments/Local Urban Bodies, Voluntary Organizations, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) , institutions and others.
- **Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Beggars:**
  - It will be a **comprehensive scheme for persons engaged in the act of begging.**
  - The scheme has been implemented in the selected cities on pilot basis having large concentrations of the Beggar community.
  - During the year 2019-20, this Ministry had released an amount of Rs. 1 Crore to **National Institute of Social Defence (NISD)** and Rs. 70 Lakh to **National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC)** for skill development programmes for beggars.
- **Status of Beggars In India:**
  - According to the **Census 2011** ,total number of beggars in India is 4,13,670 (including 2,21,673 males and 1,91,997 females) and the number has increased from the last census.
  - **West Bengal tops the chart followed by Uttar Pradesh** and Bihar at number two and three respectively. Lakshadweep merely has two vagrants according to the 2011 census.
  - Among the union territories, **New Delhi had the largest number of beggars** 2,187 followed by 121 in Chandigarh.
  - Among the northeastern states, Asam topped the chart with 22,116 beggars, while Mizoram ranked low with 53 beggars.
  - Recently, the Supreme Court has agreed to examine a plea for **decriminalising begging** which has been made an offence in various states under Prevention of Begging Act.

- NBCFDC is a Government of India Undertaking under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It was incorporated under **Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956** on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1992 as a **Company not for profit**.
- Its objective is **to promote economic and developmental activities** for the benefit of **Backward Classes** and to assist the poorer section of these classes in skill development and self-employment ventures.

## National Institute of Social Defence

- The NISD is an **Autonomous Body** and is registered under **Societies Act XXI of 1860 with the Government of National Capital Territory (NCT), Delhi**.
- It is a **central advisory body** for the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- It is the nodal training and research **institute in the field of social defence**.
- The institute **currently focuses on human resource development** in the areas of drug abuse prevention, welfare of senior citizens, beggary prevention, transgender and other social defence issues.
- The mandate of the institute is **to provide inputs for the social defence programmes** of the Government of India through **training, research & documentation**.

Source: PIB

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## Events of Extreme Weather

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### Why in News

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People around the world have been doubly hit by the **Covid-19 pandemic and extreme weather events** which experts say have been **fuelled by climate change**.

### Key Points

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- **Recent Extreme Weather Events:**
  - The **unprecedented heat wave** that drove temperatures across **Canada and parts of the United States to a record high**, causing hundreds of deaths between June 25 to 30.
  - The recent **floods in Germany** that killed over 180 people in the country. **Floods** have also been reported across **several Asian countries, in China, India and Indonesia**.
  - **Cyclones Tauktae and Yaas** that hit India's west and east coasts respectively.

- **Some Causes of Extreme Weather Events:**
  - **Extreme Temperature:**
    - The **temperature of the Earth is rising every year** and increasing temperature and extreme sunshine on top of it **creates a low-pressure system.**
    - Due to which the hurricanes and other tropical storms get their way to start.
  - **High Atmospheric Winds:**
    - The jet stream is found where the **cold air from Earth's poles meets with warm tropical air.**
    - These winds help to continue and control the weather system from west to east in the northern hemisphere and from east to west in the southern hemisphere.
    - Sometimes these winds bring unpleasant weather with them which may lead to the formation of a tornado.
  - **When Pressure Systems Meet:**
    - When **too cold high-pressure systems** meet with **too warm low-pressure systems**, the **chances of extremely high waves on sea surface** increases.
    - The too cold high-pressure systems originate from sub-polar land whereas too warm low-pressure systems originate from temperate seas.
  - **Improper Weather Systems:**
    - The weather systems (such as air masses, fronts, etc.) keep on moving in a proper way which helps to maintain the weather conditions in a smoother way.
    - When the weather conditions come across any disturbance in between, it **creates disasters.**
  - **Climate Change:**
    - The world temperature has increased quite high from the past few decades and even keeps on changing year after year.
    - One of the **big reasons** for the increase in Earth's temperature **is the level of CO<sub>2</sub>.**
    - As the **CO<sub>2</sub> is increasing in the atmosphere**, the temperature of the earth is also increasing simultaneously.
  - **Global Warming:**
    - As the world temperature is increasing due to global warming simultaneously the effects of it are also increasing.
    - Global warming is contributing to **intensifying heatwaves.**
    - Global warming also **boosts the amount of water vapor in the atmosphere** which may lead to causes of severe weather like heavy rainfall, heavy snowstorm, etc.

- **Concerns:**
  - The rise in **average global temperature** is linked with **widespread changes in weather patterns**.
    - The **rising average global temperature** is making **heavy rainfall more likely**.
    - **Warmer air carries more moisture**, meaning that more water will be released eventually.
  - **Extreme weather events** like **heat waves and extreme rainfall** are likely to become more frequent or more intense with **rising anthropogenic climate change**.
 

The Theory of **Anthropogenic Climate Change** is that **humans are causing most of the current changes** to climate by burning fossil fuels such as **coal, oil, and natural gas**.
  - **Temperatures at the Earth's poles** are rising at two to three times the temperature at the equator.
    - This weakens the **jet stream of the mid-latitudes**, situated over Europe.
    - During summer and autumn, the weakening of the jet stream has a causal effect resulting in slower-moving storms.
    - This can result in more severe and longer-lasting storms with increased intensity.
  - Also, according to a study, **human-induced global warming** has contributed to the increased frequency and intensity of **cyclonic storms over the Arabian Sea**.
- **Related Initiatives:**
  - **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**
  - **India's Intended Nationally Determined Commitments (INDC)** under Paris Climate Deal.

**Source: IE**

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## **Domestic Manufacturing in Solar Energy**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the **Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** has released the **first list of photovoltaic module manufacturers in India**.

- MNRE has made it mandatory for solar cell and module manufacturers to register under the **Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM)** - an initial step towards **reducing India's dependence on solar imports and self-reliance**.
- However, given the capacity constraints for domestic manufacturers, **ALMM may pose near-term challenges for the Indian developers for planning the procurement of imported photovoltaic modules**.

## Solar Technologies

- **Solar PhotoVoltaic (SPV):** SPV cells convert solar radiation (sunlight) into electricity. A solar cell is a semi-conducting device made of silicon and/or other materials, which, when exposed to sunlight, generates electricity.
- **Solar Thermal:** Solar Thermal Power systems, also known as Concentrating Solar Power systems, use concentrated solar radiation as a high temperature energy source to produce electricity.

## Key Points

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- **About ALMM:**
  - The ALMM lists eligible models and manufacturers of solar cells and modules complying with the **BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) certification**.  
It was announced in 2019.
  - It aims to have a **quality benchmark for modules and prevent low-quality Chinese manufacturers** from dumping their products in India.
  - Enlisting in ALMM is **mandatory for manufacturers supplying to the government-owned solar projects**.  
Only the models and manufacturers included in this list shall be eligible for use in projects under Government schemes & Programmes, installed in the country.
  - Further, the word "**Government**" includes Central Government, State Government, Central Public Sector Enterprises, State Public Sector Enterprises and Central and State Organizations/Autonomous bodies.
- **Issues Related to ALMM:**
  - **May Impact Bankability of Solar Projects:** Lack of clarity about ALMM means supply uncertainty, limited module choices, no access to newer technologies, and cost increases for developers of large-scale projects.  
This may also result in a hike in solar power tariff prices which may undermine the prospects of solar energy.
  - **Overlap Between BIS and ALMM:** The ALMM was put in place to ensure the quality of solar products, but it overlaps the existing Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) certification in many aspects.
    - BIS is related to product certification, ALMM is more of a process and manufacturing facility/original equipment manufacturer certification.
    - This has created a compliance burden for domestic manufactures.
  - **Supply-side Bottlenecks:** Many developers believe that the implementation of ALMM **will deter foreign players from supplying to the Indian market**.  
With the domestic market still far away from being self-reliant, project developers are staring at a supply bottleneck in the foreseeable future.

- **Domestic Capacity of Solar Power in India:**

- There has been a **significant progress in solar capacity addition since 2014**, with India progressively emerging as the **world's third largest solar market**.
  - However, India's solar story is **largely built over imported products**.
  - The domestic solar equipment manufacturing industry has largely failed to capitalise on the opportunity.
  - Nearly **80% of the solar inputs and components are imported from China**.
- The reason for this is that **Solar cell manufacturing is a complicated process** that is technology and capital intensive and it also upgrades every 8-10 months. Further, the **global market of solar wafer and ingot manufacturing is dominated by China**, who uses anti-competitive measures to dump cheap solar equipment into India.

## Solar Energy and India

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- Just before the **Paris climate summit** in 2015, the Government of India had said it would install 175 GW of renewable power by 2022, including 100 GW of solar power.
  - In this context, the **National Solar Mission** is a major initiative of the Government of India and State Governments to promote ecologically sustainable growth while addressing India's energy security challenge.
  - Further, India's commitment as part of INDC at Paris climate deal to reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33 to 35% by 2030 from 2005 level.
- **Sustainable rooftop implementation of Solar transfiguration of India (SRISTI) scheme** envisages to promote rooftop solar power projects in India.
- The **KUSUM scheme** would provide additional income to farmers, by giving them the option to sell additional power to the grid, through solar power projects set up on their barren lands.
- Through the establishment of **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, India envisages the world to leverage solar energy potential of more than 122 countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn to promote solar energy.
  - Further, ISA's vision is to enable **One World, One Sun, One Grid (OSOWOG)**.

## Way Forward

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- ALMM and BIS certification could have been better managed by **combining these two objectives** and making it a single-window process.
- **Strong financial measures** are required to finance the solar projects, innovative steps like **green bonds**, institutional loans and clean energy funds can play a crucial role.
- Promotion of **research and development in the renewable energy sector**, especially in storage technology.
- Proper mechanism should be provided to tackle China's dumping of solar equipment.

- Framework to avoid unnecessary delays in policy decision making and implementation. India **needs a Solar Waste Management and Manufacturing Standards Policy**.

Source: DTE

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## Roadmap for India's Offshore Wind Energy

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### Why in News

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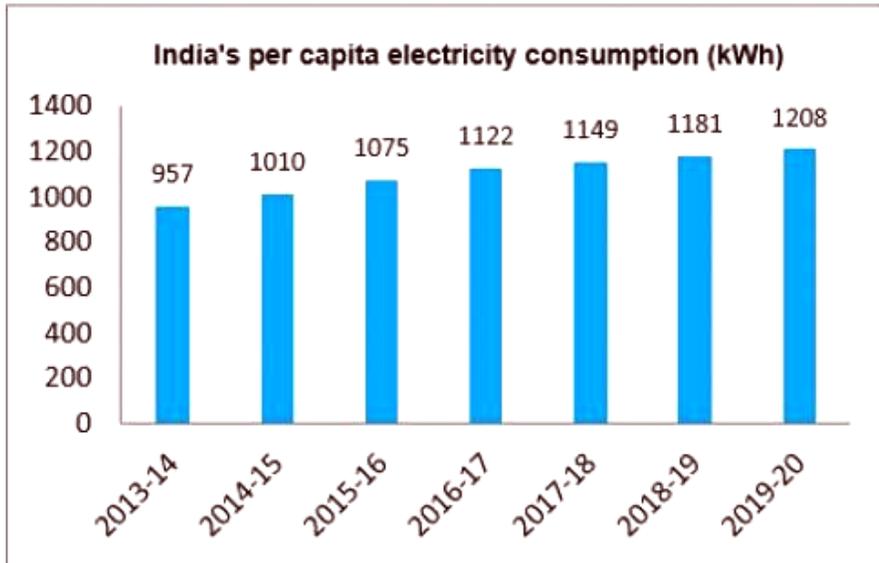
Recently, the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** has set a target of installing 5 GW of offshore capacity by 2022 and 30 GW by 2030.

India can generate 127 GW of offshore wind energy with its 7,600 km of coastline.

### Key Points

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- **About Offshore Wind Energy:**
  - **Wind energy** today typically comes in **two different “types”**: **onshore wind farms** which are large installations of **wind turbines located on land**, and **offshore wind farms** which are **installations located in bodies of water**.
  - Offshore wind energy refers to the **deployment of wind farms inside the water bodies**. They utilise the sea winds to generate electricity. These wind farms either use fixed-foundation turbines or floating wind turbines.
    - A **fixed-foundation turbine is built in shallow water**, whereas a **floating wind turbine is built in deeper waters** where its foundation is anchored in the seabed. Floating wind farms are still in their infancy.
  - Offshore wind farms must be **at least 200 nautical miles** from the shore and **50 feet deep in the ocean**.
  - Offshore wind turbines produce electricity which is **returned to shore through cables buried** in the ocean floor.
- **Status of Wind Energy in India:**
  - India's **electricity generation from wind reached 39.2 gigawatts (GW) a year** in March 2021. An addition of **another 20 GW** over the next five years is expected to happen soon.
  - The **compound annual growth rate for wind generation** has been **11.39% between 2010 and 2020**, and **for installed capacity, it has been 8.78%**.
  - More than 95% of commercially exploitable resources are **located in seven states**: Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.



- **Benefits:**

- Wind speed **over water bodies is high** and is consistent in direction. As a result, offshore wind farms **generate more electricity** per installed capacity.
- Fewer offshore turbines are required **to produce the same capacity** of energy as compared to onshore ones.
- Offshore wind farms **have a higher CUF** (capacity utilisation factor) than onshore wind farms. Therefore, offshore wind power **allows for longer operating hours**.  
A wind turbine's CUF is equal to the average output power divided by the maximum power capabilities.
- It's **possible to build bigger and taller** offshore windmills, resulting in increased energy harvest.
- Furthermore, the **wind flow is not restricted by hills or buildings**.

- **Challenges:**

- **Higher Installation Cost:**

Local substructure manufacturers, installations vessels and **trained workers are lacking in India**. Offshore wind turbines **require stronger structures and foundations** than onshore wind farms. This **can cause higher installation costs**.

- **Higher Maintenance Cost:**

The action of **waves and even high winds**, particularly during storms or hurricanes, **can damage wind turbines**. Eventually, offshore wind farms **require maintenance that is more costly and difficult to perform**.

- **Policies related to Wind Energy:**

- **National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy:** The main objective of the National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy, 2018 is to provide a framework for promotion of large grid connected wind-solar PV hybrid systems for optimal and efficient utilization of wind and solar resources, transmission infrastructure and land.
- **National Offshore Wind Energy Policy:** The National Offshore wind energy policy was notified in October 2015 with an objective to develop the offshore wind energy in the Indian **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** along the Indian coastline of 7600 km.

## Way Forward

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- **Renewable purchase obligation:** Power distribution companies, open access consumers and captive users can purchase clean energy as part of their total electricity consumption through a renewable purchase obligation.
- **Lower taxes:** In India, the GST Law exempts electricity and power sales from GST. In contrast, wind power generation companies cannot claim **input tax credits** when they pay GST to purchase goods and/or services for setting up the project.
- **Feed-in tariff:** Discoms can adopt feed-in tariff (FiT) regulations and make offshore wind power procurement mandatory. FiT can be tailored to suit each offshore wind project. FiT can be used to promote offshore wind power in the early stages of development until it becomes economically viable.
- **Deemed generation provision:** Offshore wind projects need to be protected against curtailment concerns because of the **inability of State Load Dispatch Centres (SLDCs)** to absorb large quantities of power that may be generated. For this, the offshore wind can be given a “deemed generation provision”.

**Source: DTE**

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## Stand Up India Scheme

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### Why in News

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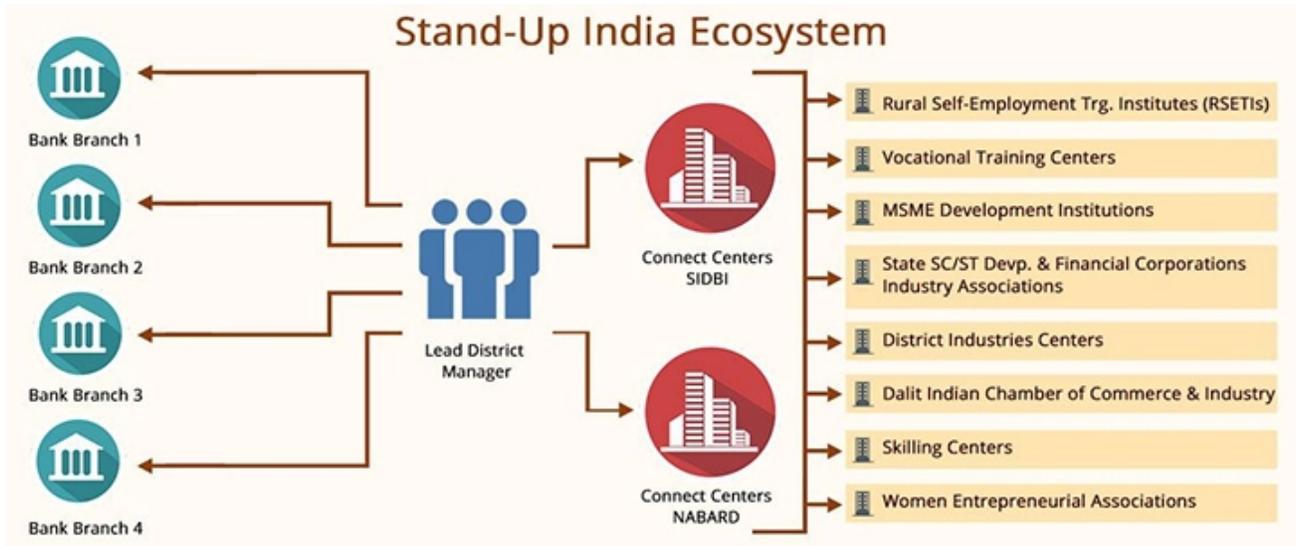
Recently, the **Ministry of Finance** has **extended the Standup India Scheme up to the year 2025**.

### Key Points

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- **Launch:**  
It was launched in April 2016 **to promote entrepreneurship at the grass-root level** focusing on economic empowerment and job creation.

- **Aim:**
  - To leverage the institutional credit structure to **reach out to the underserved sector of people such as SCs, STs and Women Entrepreneurs.**
- **Facilitates Bank Loans:**
  - The objective of this scheme is **to facilitate bank loans between Rs.10 lakh and Rs.1 crore to at least one SC or ST borrower and at least one woman borrower** per bank branch of Scheduled Commercial Banks **for setting up a Greenfield enterprise.**
    - This enterprise may be in manufacturing, services or the trading sector.
- **Eligibility:**
  - SC/ST and/or women entrepreneurs; above 18 years of age.
  - Loans under the scheme are available **for only Greenfield projects.**
    - A greenfield project is one which is not constrained by prior work. It is constructed on unused land where there is no need to remodel or demolish an existing structure.
  - Borrower **should not be in default** to any bank or financial institution.
  - In case of non-individual enterprises, **at least 51%** of the shareholding and controlling stake should be held by either **an SC/ST or Woman entrepreneur.**
- **New Changes:**
  - The **margin money requirement** for loans under the Scheme **has been reduced from 'upto 25%' to 'upto 15%'** and **activities allied to agriculture** have been included in the Scheme.
- **Connect Centers:**
  - The offices of SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) and **NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development)** are designated **Stand-Up Connect Centres (SUCC).**
- **Performance so far:**
  - Banks have sanctioned Rs 26,204 crore to about **1,16,266 beneficiaries** under the Scheme in the **last five years.**
  - The scheme has **benefited more than 93,094 women entrepreneurs.**



**Source: PIB**