



Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021

Why in News

Recently, the [Lok Sabha](#) has passed the **Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021**.

- The bill has excluded live-in couples, single men and the [LGBTQ community](#).

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Regulating ART

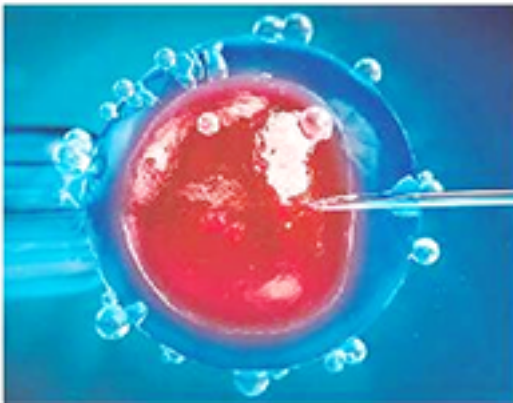


Illustration of in vitro fertilisation

- The Bill establishes the National Board, the State Boards, and the National Registry to

regulate and supervise Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) clinics. It establishes ART banks to promote ethical practices

- It proposes stringent punishment for those who attempt to control the offspring's sex, sell embryos or gametes

- As of Feb. 20, there are 517 ART clinics under the National Registry of ART clinics and banks in India, according to the ICMR

Key Points

- **Background:**

- The Government had been working on the bill to **regulate the ART industry** since 2008 when it was first drafted by the [Indian Council of Medical Research \(ICMR\)](#).
- The bill was **first introduced in Lok Sabha** in 2020 but the House had referred it to a [standing committee](#).

- **About the Bill:**

- **National Registry and Registration Authority:**

- The bill **proposes the establishment of a national registry and registration authority** for all clinics and medical professionals serving in the field.

- It will help in **maintaining a database of all clinics** and medical

professionals serving in the field.

- **State governments will appoint** registration authorities for facilitating the registration process. The registration will be **valid for five years** and can be renewed for a further five years.

- **Regulate ART Services:**

- It seeks to **regulate and supervise Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART)** clinics and ART banks, prevent misuse, adopt safe and ethical practice and so on.

- **National Board:**

- The bill **proposes the constitution of a national board.**

- The board will **set minimum standards of physical infrastructure, laboratory, diagnostic equipment and expert manpower** to be employed by clinics and banks.

- **Stringent Punishment:**

- It further **seeks stringent punishment** for those **practicing sex selection, sale of human embryos or gametes**, or found running agencies, rackets and organisations for such practices in violation of the law.

- **For First-Time Offenders:**

- It may attract a penalty between **Rs. 5 lakhs and Rs. 10 lakhs.**

- **For Subsequent Contraventions:**

- Punishable with imprisonment for a term between **eight and 12 years, and a fine between Rs. 10 and Rs. 20 lakh.**

- **Any Clinic or Bank Advertising or Offering Sex-Selective ART:**

- Punishable with imprisonment between five and **ten years, or fine between Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 25 lakh, or both.**

- **Need:**

- **To Standardise Protocols:**

- There are so many such **ART clinics that have been running without regulation** and there are **implications on the health** of those who undertake the procedure.

- If there is no regulation, the **unethical practices will increase.**

- **To Protect Women and Children:**

- The **oocyte** (a cell in an ovary) donor needs to be supported by an insurance cover. Multiple embryo implantation needs to be regulated and **children born through ART need to be protected.**

- **Concerns:**

- **Discrimination in Accessibility:**

- The Bill **allows for a married heterosexual couple and a woman above the age of marriage to use ARTs** and **excludes single men, cohabiting heterosexual couples and LGBTQ+ individuals** and couples from accessing ARTs.

- **Duplicacy:**

- Both **Surrogacy and ART Bills will set up multiple bodies for registration** which will result in duplication or worse, lack of regulation.

- **For example**, a surrogacy clinic is not required to report surrogacy to the National Registry.
- **Violates Article 14:**
 - The bill **violates [Article 14](#) of India's constitution** and is also silent on the rights of children.
 - According to **Article 14**, equality before law and equal protection of law to any person within India cannot be denied.
- **Cost of the Services:**
 - The **cost of the procedure should be effectively monitored** so that even the poor can avail of its services.

Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART)

- ART is used to **treat infertility**. It includes fertility treatments that handle both a woman's egg and a man's sperm. It works by removing eggs from a woman's body and mixing them with sperm to make embryos. The embryos are then put back in the woman's body.
- [In Vitro fertilization \(IVF\)](#) is the most common and effective type of ART.
- ART procedures sometimes use donor eggs, donor sperm, or previously frozen embryos. It may also involve a surrogate carrier.

Way Forward

- Clinics must have **ethics committees and mandated counselling services** should be independent of them.
- **Prior versions of the Bill regulated research using embryos**, which must be brought back and definitions of commissioning “couple”, “infertility”, “ART clinics” and “banks” need to be synchronised between the **Bill and the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill**.
- **All ART bodies should be bound** by the directions of central and state governments in the national interest, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency and morality.
- All the **constitutional, medico-legal, ethical and regulatory concerns** raised by the Bill must be thoroughly reviewed before affecting millions.

[Source: TH](#)

India joins G20's Troika

Why in News

Recently, India joined the [G20 'Troika'](#) and with this **India has started the procedure** for taking over the **G20** presidency next year.

Key Points

- **About 'Troika':**
 - It refers to the **top grouping within the G20** that consists of the current, previous and the incoming presidencies — **Indonesia, Italy and India**.
 - As a Troika member, **India will work closely with Indonesia and Italy** to ensure

Consent of States for CBI Investigations

Why in News

Recently, a [Supreme Court](#) bench has referred a case, in which the [CBI \(Central Bureau of Investigation\)](#) had filed an affidavit on the withdrawal of 'general consent' to the CBI by several States, for consideration of the Chief Justice of India.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- The CBI was **set up in 1963** by a resolution of the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
 - Now, the CBI comes under the administrative control of the **Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)** of the **Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions**.
- The establishment of the CBI was recommended by the **Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption (1962-1964)**.
- The CBI is **not a statutory body**. It derives its powers from the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946**.
- The CBI is the **main investigating agency of the Central Government**.
 - It also provides assistance to the [Central Vigilance Commission](#) and [Lokpal](#).
 - It is also the nodal police agency in India which coordinates investigations on behalf of [Interpol Member countries](#).

Key Points

- **Background:**
 - **Withdrawal of Consent:** Eight States have withdrawn consent to the CBI for launching investigations in their territory.
 - **Eight States** — West Bengal, Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram have withdrawn consent to the CBI for launching investigations in their territory.
 - **Argument of CBI:** According to the CBI, such widespread withdrawal of consent is **rendering it redundant with regard to investigation of corruption charges against Central employees** and undertakings working within the territorial jurisdiction of various States.
 - While the States' responses were primarily an **act of politico-legal ring-fencing** against the politics of the Central Government employing its agencies, the withdrawal of general consent by a number of States **has left the CBI handicapped**.
- **About the Consent Given by State Government:**
 - **Legal and Constitutional Basis:** According to **Section 6** of the [Delhi Special Police Establishment Act of 1946](#) under which the CBI functions, the State's consent is required to extend CBI investigation beyond Union Territories.
 - The legal foundation of the CBI has been construed to be based on **Entry 80** of the [Union List](#) which provides for the extension of powers of the police force belonging to one State to any area in another State but not without its permission.
 - "Police" is Entry 2 in the **State List** under the [Seventh Schedule](#) of the Constitution.
 - **Types of Consent:**
 - There are **two types of consent** for a probe by the CBI.
 - **General Consent:** When a state gives a general consent (Section 6 of the

Delhi Special Police Establishment Act) to the CBI for probing a case, **the agency is not required to seek fresh permission every time** it enters that state in connection with investigation or for every case.

- A general consent is given to facilitate that seamless investigation in a case of corruption or violence.
- **Specific Consent:** When a general consent is withdrawn, CBI **needs to seek case-wise consent** for investigation from the concerned state government.
 - If specific consent is not granted, the CBI officials will not have the power of police personnel when they enter that state.
 - This hurdle impedes seamless investigation by the CBI.
- **SC Judgement:**
 - In the **Advance Insurance Co. Ltd case, 1970**, a Constitution Bench held that the definition of "State", as contained in **The General Clauses Act**, includes Union Territories as well.
 - Hence the CBI, being a force constituted for Union Territories as recognised under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act of 1946, **can conduct investigation into the territories of the States only with their consent.**
- **Impact on Pending Investigation:**
 - The withdrawal of general consent does not affect pending investigation (**Kazi Lendhup Dorji v. CBI, 1994**) or the cases registered in another State in relation to which investigation leads into the territory of the State which has withdrawn general consent, **nor does the withdrawal circumscribe the power of the jurisdictional High Court to order a CBI investigation.**

Way Forward

- The fundamental impediment lies in the law that does not clearly envisage the CBI as a federal police force.
- The [United Nations](#) Convention against Corruption to which India is a signatory requires firm **impartial steps to combat corruption at all levels.**
- The predicament of withdrawal of consent by a number of States **may lead to the legislative move of creating a federal agency** with manifest powers and autonomy while retaining the process of appointment of the CBI chief by a committee consisting of the constitutional trio, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Justice of India preferably by consensus.
 - In case of such a legislation, **Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act may give way to a clearer legal provision** which guarantees fair investigation and prosecution.

[Source: TH](#)

Global Gateway Plan: EU

Why in News

Recently, the European Commission has announced a plan, called **Global Gateway**, to mobilise **EURO 300 billion by 2027 in public and private infrastructure investment around the world.**

- Although the plan doesn't mention China, it is seen as a response to [China's Belt and Road strategy.](#)

Key Points

▪ About Global Gateway Plan:

- **Developmental Dimensions:** With Global Gateway, the EU, in a **Team Europe approach**, will offer its partners a response to the urgent needs:
 - To develop **sustainable and high quality digital, climate and energy and transport infrastructures**.
 - Strengthen **health, education and research systems** across the world.
- **Funding:** To finance the project, the EU will use its **European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus**.
 - Under this, 40 billion euros are made available in guarantee capacity, and will offer grants of up to 18 billion euros from **external assistance programs**.
 - The plan will need funding from **international institutions** and from the private sector if it is to get anywhere near its target.
 - The financing will be done under fair and favorable terms in order to limit the risk of debt distress.
- **Offshoot of B3W Project:** The EU strategy is an offshoot of the **[Build Back Better World \(B3W\) Initiative](#)**.
 - B3W is an international infrastructure investment initiative announced by the **[Group of Seven \(G-7\) richest democracies](#)** in June 2021.

▪ About China's Belt And Road Initiative:

- **About:** The BRI project was **launched in 2013**, it broadly aims to facilitate cross-border transportation of goods, access to energy, creating demand for existing excess capacity in Chinese industries.
 - Officially, it aims to **develop land and sea infrastructure to better connect China to Asia, Europe and Africa** for trade and development, and it has found many partners around the world.
 - China had an overall exposure of investment of around **USD 750 billion between 2013 to mid-2020**.
 - China argues that it respects its **partners' sovereignty while providing loans that benefit joint projects**, while critics say Beijing's contractual terms ignore abuses of **human, labour and environmental rights**.
- **BRI's Criticism:** BRI project has been heavily criticized by the western world for the following reasons:
 - **China's Debt Trap Policy:** BRI is being seen as a part of China's debt trap policy, wherein **China intentionally extends excessive credit to another country** with the intention of extracting economic or political concessions from the debtor country.
 - The western countries see it as a **tool for China to influence poorer countries**.
 - They criticise China for inciting emerging economies to take on too much debt, and **allege the secretive tender process is prone to corruption**.
 - **New Colonialism:** They have attacked the initiative as new colonialism, or the **[Marshall Plan](#)** for the 21st century.
 - **Dual Nature of Product:** Also, projects like **[China-Pakistan Economic Corridor \(CPEC\)](#)**, building of **Colombo Port City** Project in Sri Lanka are not only commercial in nature but have strategic implications too.
- **India's Stand:**
 - India has repeatedly said it will not join BRI because it's key component – the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)** – passes through PoK, which is disputed territory between India and Pakistan.
 - Further, in order to counter China's aggressiveness, India has initiated **[Act East](#)**

[Policy, SAGAR vision](#) and is part of multilateral projects like [Asia-Africa Growth Corridor \(AAGC\)](#), and [“Free and Open Indo Pacific” initiative](#).

[Source: TH](#)

Natural Farming

Why in News

Recently, [NITI Aayog](#) has conducted a national workshop on **Natural Farming**.

- There are many working models of natural farming all over the world, the [Zero Budget Natural Farming \(ZBNF\)](#) is the most popular model in India. This comprehensive, natural, and spiritual farming system was developed by [Padma Shri Subhash Palekar](#).

Key Points

- **About:**

- It can be defined as a **“chemical- free farming and livestock based ”**. Soundly grounded in agro-ecology, it is a diversified farming system that integrates crops, trees and livestock, allowing the optimum use of functional biodiversity.
- It holds the **promise of enhancing farmers’** income while delivering many other benefits, such as **restoration of soil fertility and environmental health, and mitigating and/or reducing greenhouse gas emissions**.
 - This farming approach was introduced by **Masanobu Fukuoka**, a Japanese farmer and philosopher, in his 1975 book *The One-Straw Revolution*.
- It builds on natural or ecological processes that exist in or around farms. Internationally, Natural Farming is **considered a form of regenerative agriculture—a prominent strategy to save the planet**.
- It has the **potential to manage land practices and sequester carbon from the atmosphere in soils and plants**, where it is actually useful instead of being detrimental.
- In India, Natural farming is promoted as Bhartiya **Prakritik Krishi Paddhati Programme** (BPKP) under [Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana \(PKVY\)](#).
 - BPKP is aimed at promoting traditional indigenous practices which reduce externally purchased inputs.
- Natural Farming, as the name suggests, is the art, practice and, increasingly, the science of **working with nature to achieve much more with less**.



COMPONENTS OF NATURAL FARMING



Beejamrit

The process includes treatment of seed using cow dung, urine and lime based formulations.

Whapasa

The process involves activating earthworms in the soil in order to create water vapor condensation.



Jivamrit

The process enhances the fertility of soil using cow urine, dung, flour of pulses and jaggery concoction.

Mulching

The process involves creating micro climate using different mulches with trees, crop biomass to conserve soil moisture.

Plant Protection

The process involves spraying of biological concoctions which prevents pest, disease and weed problems and protects the plant and improves their soil fertility.

▪ Aim:

- To make farming **viable and aspirational by increasing net incomes of farmers** on account of cost reduction, reduced risks, similar yields, incomes from intercropping.
- To drastically **cut down production costs by encouraging farmers to prepare essential biological inputs** using on-farm, natural and home-grown resources.

▪ Significance:

◦ **Minimized Cost Of Production:**

- It is considered as a **cost- effective farming practice** with scope for raising employment and rural development.

◦ **Ensures Better Health:**

- As Natural Farming **does not use any synthetic chemicals, health risks and hazards are eliminated.** The food has higher nutrition density and therefore offers better health benefits.

◦ **Employment Generation:**

- It generates employment **on account of natural farming input enterprises, value addition, marketing in local areas,** etc. The surplus from natural farming is invested in the village itself.
- As it has the **potential to generate employment,** thereby stemming the migration of rural youth.

- **Environment Conservation:**
 - It ensures **better soil biology, improved agrobiodiversity** and a more judicious usage of water with much smaller carbon and nitrogen footprints.
- **Reduced Water Consumption:**
 - By working with diverse crops that help each other and cover the soil to prevent unnecessary water loss through evaporation, **Natural Farming optimizes the amount of ‘crop per drop’.**
- **Rejuvenates Soil Health:**
 - The most immediate impact of Natural Farming is on the biology of soil—on microbes and other living organisms such as earthworms. Soil health depends entirely on the living organisms in it.
- **Livestock Sustainability:**
 - The integration of livestock in the farming system plays an important role in Natural farming and helps in restoring the ecosystem. **Eco Friendly bio-inputs, such as Jivamrit and Beejamrit, are prepared from cow dung and urine, and other natural products.**
- **Resilience:**
 - The changes in soil structure with the help of organic carbon, no/low tillage and plant diversity are supporting **plant growth even under extreme situations like severe droughts and withstanding severe flood and wind damage during cyclones.**
 - NF impacts many farmers positively **by imparting resilience to the crops against weather extremities.**
- **Related Initiatives:**
 - **Rainfed Area Development (RAD):** It focuses on Integrated Farming System (IFS) for enhancing productivity and minimizing risks associated with climatic variabilities.
 - **Sub-mission on Agro Forestry (SMAF):** It aims to encourage farmers to plant multi-purpose trees together with the agriculture crops for climate resilience and an additional source of income to the farmers, as well as enhanced feedstock to inter alia wood-based and herbal industry.
 - **National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA),** to develop, demonstrate and disseminate the techniques to make agriculture resilient to adverse impacts of climate change.
 - **Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER):** It is a **Central Sector Scheme**, a sub-mission under NMSA, aims to develop certified organic production in a value chain mode.
 - **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY):** It was launched in 2015 to address the issues of water resources and provide a permanent solution that envisages Per Drop More Crop.
 - **Green India Mission:** It was launched in 2014 under the umbrella of **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)** with the primary objective of protecting, restoring and enhancing India’s diminishing forest cover.

Differences between Natural Farming and Organic Farming

| Organic Farming | Natural Farming |
|--|--|
| In organic farming, organic fertilizers and manures like compost, vermicompost, cow dung manure , etc. are used and added to farmlands from external sources. | In natural farming, neither chemical nor organic fertilizers are added to the soil. In fact, no external fertilizers are added to soil or given to plants whatsoever. |
| Organic farming still requires basic agro practices like plowing, tilting, mixing of manures, weeding, etc. to be performed. | In natural farming, decomposition of organic matter by microbes and earthworms is encouraged right on the soil surface itself, which |

| | |
|---|--|
| | gradually adds nutrition in the soil, over the period. |
| Organic farming is still expensive due to the requirement of bulk manures , and it has an ecological impact on surrounding environments; whereas, natural agriculture is an extremely low-cost farming method, completely molding with local biodiversity. | In natural farming there is no plowing, no tilling of soil and no fertilizers, and no weeding is done just the way it would be in natural ecosystems. |

Way Forward

- The world's **population is predicted to expand to approximately 10 billion by 2050**. It is expected that agricultural demand will increase up to 50%, in comparison to 2013, in such a situation a transformational process towards 'holistic' approaches such as **agro-ecology, agroforestry, climate-smart agriculture, and conservation agriculture is a necessity**.
- There is a **need to Strengthen agricultural market infrastructure** and extend the procurement mechanism to all foodgrain and non-foodgrain crops to all States.
- Implementation of price deficiency payment system for selected crops. There is a **need to enact legislation on 'right to sell at MSP' needs immediate attention**.
- **MGNREGS ((Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act)** must also be linked with farm work in order to reduce the cost of cultivation which has escalated at a faster pace over the past few years.

[Source: PIB](#)

Ujjwala Scheme

Why in News

The [Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana](#) saw a spurt in new distribution just before the 2019 general election as per [RTI \(Right To Information\)](#) plea.

- The **target under the scheme** was to release 8 crore LPG connections to the deprived household by 2020. This was achieved in August 2019, **seven months ahead of the March 2020 deadline**.
- In August 2021, the Prime Minister launched the second phase of [Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana \(PMUY\) or Ujjwala 2.0 Scheme](#).

Key Points

- **About:**
 - **PMUY-I:**
 - Launched in May 2016 to provide LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) connections to poor households.
 - **PMUY-II:**
 - It is aimed to provide maximum benefit to the migrants who live in other states and find it difficult to submit address proof.
 - Now they will only have to give "**Self Declaration**" to avail the benefit.
- **Objectives:**

- Empowering women and protecting their health.
- Reducing the number of deaths in India due to unclean cooking fuel.
- Preventing young children from a significant number of acute respiratory illnesses caused due to indoor air pollution by burning fossil fuel.

▪ **Features:**

- The scheme provides a financial support of **Rs 1600 for each LPG connection to the BPL households.**
- Along with a deposit-free LPG connection, **Ujjwala 2.0 will provide the first refill and a hotplate free of cost to the beneficiaries.**

▪ **Target:**

- **Under Ujjwala 1.0**, the target was to provide LPG connections to 50 million women from the Below Poverty Line (BPL) households, by March 2020. However, in August 2018, women from seven other categories were brought under the purview of the scheme:
 - **SC/ST**, those under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)**, beneficiaries of the **Antyoday Anna Yojana (AAY)**, **Forest Dwellers**, most backward classes, tea gardens and Islands.
- **Under Ujjwala 2.0**, an additional 10 million LPG connections will be provided to the beneficiaries.
 - Government has also **fixed a target of providing piped gas to 21 lakh homes in 50 districts.**

▪ **Nodal Ministry:**

- Ministry of **Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG).**

▪ **Achievements:**

- In the first phase of the PMUY, **8 crore poor families, including from the Dalit and tribal communities, were given free cooking gas connections.**
- The LPG infrastructure has expanded manifold in the country. In the last six years, more than 11,000 new LPG distribution centres have opened across the country.

▪ **Challenges:**

- **Low Consumption of Refills:**
 - Encouraging the **sustained usage of LPG remains a big challenge**, and low consumption of refills hindered recovery of outstanding loans disbursed under the scheme.
 - The annual average refill consumption on 31st December 2018 was only 3.21.
- **System Anomalies:**
 - There are **deficiencies** such as the **issuance of connections to unintended beneficiaries**, and problems with the software of the state-run oil marketing companies for identifying intended beneficiaries and inadequacies in the deduplication process.

Way Forward

- The scheme should be **extended to poor households in urban and semi-urban slum areas.**
- There is a **need for achieving a higher LPG coverage** of the population by providing connections to households that do not have LPG.
- Entering **Aadhaar** numbers of all adult family members of existing as well as new beneficiaries to make deduplication effective and appropriate measures in distributors' software to restrict issuance to ineligible beneficiaries.

Source: IE

Job Losses During 2020 Lockdown

Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry of Labour and Employment** presented the data on job loss during the [2020 lockdown for Covid pandemic](#).

- The data is based on the [All India Quarterly Establishment based Employment Survey \(AQEES\)](#).

| SECTORS | NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (IN LAKH) | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--------|-----------------------|--------|
| | Prior to Lockdown (before March 25, 2020) | | As on July 1, 2020 | |
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Manufacturing | 98.7 | 26.7 | 87.9 | 23.3 |
| Construction | 5.8 | 1.8 | 5.1 | 1.5 |
| Trade | 16.1 | 4.5 | 14.8 | 4 |
| Transport | 11.3 | 1.9 | 11.1 | 1.9 |
| Education | 38.2 | 29.5 | 36.8 | 28.1 |
| Health | 15 | 10.6 | 14.8 | 10.1 |
| Accommodation & Restaurants | 7 | 1.9 | 6.2 | 1.7 |
| IT/BPOs | 13.6 | 6.3 | 12.8 | 6.1 |
| Financial Services | 11.5 | 5.9 | 11.3 | 5.7 |
| Total* | 217.8 | 90.0 | 201.5 | 83.3 |

Key Points

- **About:**
 - **All-India Quarterly Establishment-based Employment Survey (AQEES):** The AQEES has been taken up by the **Labour Bureau** to provide **frequent (quarterly) updates** about the employment and related variables of establishments, in both organised and unorganised segments of nine selected sectors.
 - The 9 sectors are Manufacturing, Construction, Trade, Transport, Education, Health, Accommodation and Restaurants, [IT/BPO](#), Financial Service Activities.
 - **Components:**
 - **Quarterly Employment Survey (QES):** It provides the employment estimates for the establishments employing 10 or more workers.
 - The revamped **QES** was conducted during the first quarter (April-June 2021).

- The **earlier version of QES was suspended in 2018**, citing a gap in numbers with the payroll data.
- **Area Frame Establishment Survey (AFES):** It covers the unorganised segment (with less than 10 workers) through a sample survey.

▪ Major Findings:

- **Manufacturing sector:** It recorded job losses of 14.2 lakh between the pre-[lockdown](#) (March 2020) and post-lockdown (July 2020) period.
 - About **7.5 % job losses were seen during the lockdown for Covid pandemic in 2020.**
- **Financial services sector:** It recorded a **job loss of 0.4 lakh and 1 lakh for the IT/BPOs sector** during the same period.
- **Other sectors: Construction sector** recorded a loss of 1 lakh, while **trade and education sectors** registered job losses of 1.8 lakh and 2.8 lakh, respectively.
- **Female workers:** [Females](#) registered a **job loss of 7.44 %** among the nine key sectors.
 - Female employment in the manufacturing sector reduced to 23.3 lakh (as on July 2020) from 26.7 lakh (as on March 2020).
 - Female workers in the construction sector were reduced to 1.5 lakh from 1.8 lakh.
 - Female employment in the trade sector reduced to 4 lakh (as on July 1, 2020) from 4.5 lakh (as on March 2020)
- **Male workers:** Males registered a **job loss of 7.48 %** between the pre-lockdown and post-lockdown period.
 - Male workers in manufacturing during the same period reduced to 87.9 lakh from 98.7 lakh.
 - Male workers in the construction sector were reduced to 5.1 lakh from 5.8 lakh during the lockdown.
 - Male employment in the trade sector reduced to 14.8 lakh (as on July 2020) from 16.1 lakh (as on March 2020).

▪ Latest Findings:

- The [new quarterly employment survey](#) released in September had shown **employment** in key nine sectors **rising to 3.08 crore in April-June 2021 from 2.37 crore in 2013-14.**
 - The base year was chosen based on the [sixth economic census.](#)
- Employment in the **organised non-farm segment** decreased in 27 % of the establishments due to the pandemic.
 - As much as 81 % of the workers received full wages during the lockdown period (March 2020-June 2020), 16 % received reduced wages and only 3 % were denied any wages.

▪ Significance:

- Information gathered through these surveys would **enable the government** to understand significant issues and help **to frame evidence-based National Employment Policy.**
 - Other than this the ministry has launched two more surveys namely, **All-India Survey of Migrant Workers** and [All-India Survey on Domestic Workers.](#)

▪ Related Initiatives:

- [Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme](#)
- [Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana \(DDU-GKY\)](#)
- [Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission](#)
- [The Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat package 3.0](#)

World AIDS Day 2021

Why in News

[World AIDS Day](#) is observed on **1st December every year all over the world** to spread awareness about the disease and remember all those who lost their lives to it.

Key Points

▪ About:

- It was founded in 1988 by the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) and was the first ever global health day with a motto of raising public awareness about [Acquired ImmunoDeficiency Syndrome \(AIDS\)](#).
 - AIDS is a pandemic disease caused by the infection of [Human Immunodeficiency Virus \(HIV\)](#), which damages the human immune system.
 - There were an estimated 37.7 million people living with HIV at the end of 2020, over two thirds of whom (25.4 million) are in the African Region.
 - In **2020**, 680 000 people died from HIV-related causes and 1.5 million people acquired HIV.

▪ Theme for 2021: 'End inequalities. End AIDS'.

- With a special focus on reaching people left behind, WHO and its partners are highlighting the growing inequalities in access to essential HIV services.
- WHO is calling on **global leaders and citizens to rally to confront the inequalities that drive AIDS** and to reach people who are currently not receiving essential HIV services.

▪ Significance:

- The very day reminds the public and government that HIV has not gone away and there is still **a vital need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education**.
- It is an opportunity **to show solidarity with the millions of people** living with HIV worldwide.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

- HIV attacks CD4, a type of [White Blood Cell](#) (T cells) in the body's immune system. T cells are those cells that move around the body detecting anomalies and infections in cells.
- After entering the body, HIV multiplies itself and destroys CD4 cells, thus severely damaging the human immune system. Once this virus enters the body, it can never be removed.
- The CD4 count of a person infected with HIV reduces significantly. In a healthy body, CD4 count is between 500- 1600, but in an infected body, it can go as low as 200.

PDF Reference URL