



Sub-categorization of the OBCs:

Scopes?

(Indian Express)

Context:

- The chairman of the National Commission for Backward Classes, Bhagwan Lal Sahni, observed that the NCBC is in assistance of four subcategories of the Other Backward Classes.
- This measure complies with the endorsement of the Justice Rohini Commission.

National Commission for Backward Classes:

- NCBC was created in 1993, in the aftermath of the commission was the result of the Indra Sawhney Vs Union of India case.
- It was given the status of the constitutional body in conformity with the 123rd constitutional amendment bill of 2017 and the 102nd amendment of 2018.
- Article 338B of the Indian Constitution talks about the context with respect to the NCBC. The body functions under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Sub categorization of OBCs:

- The sub-categories of the OBCs will be done by keeping those sections in mind which have either benefited competently or less benefited from this skepticism.
- While the two other categories will be for the least benefited and those who have not been benefited from the present structure.

Justice Rohini Commission:

- The commission was constituted in 2017. This commission has been constituted to study, observe, and report on the sub-categorization of OBCs.
- The commission will be finalizing the report by July 2021. The panel's terms of reference are to research the extent of inequitable distribution of benefits of reservation among communities.
- The panel will also find out the structure, criteria, and framework for sub-categorization within the OBCs.

Ajit Satpathy

State Bank of Sikkim: Now Under RBI Purview

State Bank of Sikkim: Now Under RBI Purview

(Business Standard)

Context:

- Recently, the Reserve Bank of India has brought the State Bank of Sikkim under its regulating umbrella.
- The bank enjoyed a special status under Article 371F due to which the Banking Regulation Act of 1949 and Companies Act of 2013 does not extend to Sikkim.

Background:

- The state of Sikkim was made an associate state in 1974 and later the Thirty-sixth Amendment Act of 1975, made it an integral part of the Indian Union in 1975.
- Since the bank was established prior to this, it still follows the old laws as per Article 371F of the Constitution.
- The central direct taxes are also not extended to Sikkim. As per Sec 10(26AAA) any income originating to the Sikkimese through any means in the State or through interest on securities are not included in the total income.
- The people are also not liable to pay Income Tax. The RBI had limited agreement to administer the public debt of the bank.

About the State Bank of Sikkim:

- It is a state-owned bank. The HQ of the bank is in Gangtok.
- It serves under the arbitration of the State of Sikkim. It handles the banking services as well as the treasury functions of the State Government.
- The bank is an autonomous body and was established in the year 1968 five years before Sikkim was made a part of India in 1973 for the first time.
- It was not monitored by the Reserve Bank of India, unlike other banks until February 21, 2021. This regulatory amendment will not change the structure of bank ownership.

Ajit Satpathy

India-Maldives Relation- A Bumpy Ride!!!

(GS Paper II, International Relations)

(Source- The Indian Express)

Context:

- India and Maldives signed a pact to develop, support and maintain a Maldives “National Defence Force Coast Guard Harbour” for maritime security in the region during the visit of India’s External Affairs Minister S.Jaishankar to the Maldives.

Highlights of the pact:

- The dockyard will be developed at the Uthuru Thila Falhu Naval Base by India.
- This pact was a part of a defence action plan signed in 2016 during the visit of Maldives President Abdulla Yameen to India.
- India will develop communication resources and radar services and will also provide training to the concerned authority.
- Project Execution contract for construction of a road in the Maldives second largest populated city, Addu, was also signed.

Significance of the pact:

- This pact will serve the strategic interest of both countries and will ensure maritime safety in the Indian Ocean Region.
- It will create a strategic alliance that will counter the Chinese growing influence in the Indian Ocean Region.
- It will establish India’s credibility and influence in the Indian Ocean region.
- It will facilitate HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief) efforts.
- It will strengthen the Maldives defence capabilities.

Background story:

- In 2013, the Government of Maldives requested India for support and cooperation in enhancing the capabilities of the Maldives Defence Forces in Maritime surveillance.
- The Maldives requested India subsequently in 2015 and 2016 for this development.

Ayush Sir

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Ayush Sir

The blank pages in India's online learning experience (GS-3 The hindu editorial)

COVID-19 pandemic impact can be seen in the social, economic and political spheres.

Education has been impacted much.

- Around 300 million children across all age groups has been reported to be out of school in India. Effect is much worse, especially on the education of the girl child.
- Challenges faced by education sector
 - Delivery of education especially of pedagogical processes, classroom assessment frameworks, students' support and teacher-student engagement.
 - poor access to digital data
 - The children were over burdened with household/farm work
 - girl students in particular were apprehensive of being given away in marriage.
 - students, parents and teachers were unprepared for the pedagogic shift.
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- What Government must do: Realistic assessment is key
 - Assessment of those students who have returned to schools after 'digital learning' at home.
- What is the challenge during COVID-19?
- School closures have had a significant impact on the vulnerable and underprivileged sections.
 - postponement of examinations and the curtailment of the prescribed syllabi.

Government's response

- sharing free e-learning platforms

- Diksha portal:an app by the National Council of Educational Research
- e-learning content aligned to the curriculum, and e-Pathshala, and Training for Classes 1 to 12 in multiple languages.
- SWAYAM portal: aimed at school (Classes 1 to 12) and higher education
- 1,900 complete courses including teaching videos, computer weekly assignments, examinations and credit transfers,.
- SWAYAM Prabha:telecasting of educational programmes
- 32 devoted directly to home channels to the.
- such initiatives have failed to take into account existing divides
- spatial, digital, gender and class

The impact is multi-fold

- Due to closure of schools
 - boys became inattentive to studies
 - Girls were more involved in household chores with lesser opportunities.
 - children have also forgotten what they learnt earlier.
 - disruption of a range of activities such as the mid-day meal scheme, the school health programme and pre-metric scholarships to girl children.

Example of Rajasthan

- According to NSS,2017-18-> 20% of girls in the age group 15-16 were out of school against the national average of 13.5
- Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi projects
- A study by the Institute of Development Studies in Jaipur

- most girls in Rajasthan (between 13-16 years) were keen to return to school
- the online education plan and platform of the State government did not work.
- The reasons for pitfall
 - The inability of students to access online education were
 - lack of devices
 - poor or no Internet connectivity
 - girls' preoccupation with household

NGO activities as a contrast

- schools run by the NGO sector did well
 - Taking care of the poor and backward segments
 - Here teachers have visited individual students at home.
 - children were taught in small groups.

What the Government must do.

- Education planning must be context and content specific, gender responsive and inclusion of all.
- access to online education,
- removal of barriers in pre-matric scholarships
- Ensure that mid-day meals, iron and folic acid tablets must be distributed.
- provision of personal hygiene products to girl students
- re-enrolment of children as specified in the National Education Policy 2020.
- Mass outreach programmes with civil society to encourage re-enrolment.
- Remedial tuitions and counselling are advisable
- making secondary education for girls free

- governments has to keep the budgetary share of education to 6% of GDP

Voice vote as constitutional subterfuge (GS-2 The hindu editorial)

Parliament is under article 79, Rajya Sabha under 80 and Lok Sabha under 81.

Issue:- By passing Rajya Sabha or upper house in state and subterfuge the constitutional mechanism.

- Though Opposition parties hold the strong in the upper house of Karnataka assembly still Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill was passed.
- Why such things are happening
 - The Upper House has limited say/can't stop the bill as It is a Money Bill.
- The Rajya Sabha's role
- Maybe the bills are the demand of the time but dubious mechanisms followed for their enactment can't be justifiable.
- The Rajya Sabha has historically stopped the ruling party
- 42nd Constitutional Amendment could not be repealed by the Janata regime because the Congress holded strong presence in the Rajya Sabha.
- Rajya Sabha is undoubtedly imperfect, why?
- partly because of constitutional design
- partly because obviously undesirable practices
- E.g members representing States they have no affiliation to, have been allowed to flourish.

The value of bicameralism

- According to Jeremy Waldron
 - The virtues of bicameralism are much more important when the two Houses are chosen by different processes of representation and elected on a different schedule.
 - the monopoly of the Lower House to represent the 'people' makes bicameralism desirable
 - Judicial review is hardly practiced in India nowadays so importance of second chamber's performance.
 - In India a Westminster system where the Lower House is dominated by the executive. The Rajya Sabha can make a robust separation of powers possible.

Taking legislature seriously

- In British parliament->
 - Prime Minister was being taken to task on 'Prime Minister's Questions' every Wednesday even during the pandemic
 - Parliament in India was not even convened

Deep Ocean Mission

(General Studies paper 3- Environment

Source- Pib)

Context-

Union finance minister in the budget 2021 22 announced an allocation of over rupees 4000 crore over next 5 years for deep ocean missions. This is in addition to the Rs. 1897 crores located for the ministry of Earth science in the current financial year.

Ministry-

This scheme has been proposed by Ministry of earth sciences

Objective of the mission-

Deep ocean mission is Government of India mission to study the various aspects of ocean in an integrated framework as the Indian Space Research Organisation has been studying space

various components of the scheme

Studies are planned at deep ocean close to 6000 and following six major component-

- **mineral exploration on the sea bed**
- **study and mapping of biodiversity**
- **study of climate change**
- **exploration of marine biology and developing allied courses and training**
- **development and demonstration of ocean exploration**

- **Offshore Technologies for future**

Features of the scheme

- **This mission will enable India to exploit the resource of the central Indian ocean basin**
- **India has been allocated aside of 150000 kilometre per square in the central Ocean basin United Nations International seabed authority for the exploitation of poly metallic nodules**

What is polymetallic nodules

- **These are potato shaped largely Porus nodules found in abundance carpeting the sea floor of the world ocean in the deep sea.**
- **These are considered to be of economic and strategic importance for the country.**
- **The metals can be extracted and used in electronic devices, smartphones, batteries and even for solar panels.**

Environmental consequences-

- The scrapping of the ocean floor by machines can alter what destroy its in habitats
- Sea Species could be affected by noise vibration and Light pollution caused by mining equipment
- Issues or leaks and spills of fuel and toxic product

-Khyati Khare

PRELIMS FACTS OF 22 FEBRUARY

1. India successfully test-fires Helina, Dhruvastra anti-tank guided missiles



DRDO indigenously developed Helina and Dhruvastra Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM) from the Advanced Light Helicopter at the Pokhran deserts in Rajasthan.

Features“Lock-on-Before-Launch (LOBL)” principle works. The missile systems have the all-weather day-and-night capability.

Defense Research and Development & Chairman DRDO: DrGSatheesh Reddy.

DRDO Headquarters: New Delhi.

DRDO Established: 1958.

2.19 February 2021:Observed as a 6th Soil Health Card Day



Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme, and create awareness about the benefits of the scheme. PM launched the Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme on 19th February 2015 at Suratgarh in Rajasthan. The scheme ensures additional income to farmers by an increase in yields and it also promotes sustainable farming.

3. '2020 Tree City of the World' recognized Hyderabad



United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Arbor Day Foundation recognized Telangana's capital, Hyderabad as a 2020 Tree City of World. With this recognition, it has joined a network of like-minded global cities that recognize the importance of trees in building healthy, resilient, and happy cities.

Food and Agriculture Organization Head: Qu Dongyu

Food and Agriculture Organization Headquarters: Rome, Italy.