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GS Advanced Program 2023

Generic Booklet

Test Name/Code/No. : 692011...

Name			
Email ID.			
Roll No.			
Mobile No.		Date	

Allotted Time : 60 Minutes

Instructions to Candidates -

- There are 7 Questions in this Question paper.
- All Questions are Compulsory.
- For all updates, please visit the noticeboard -
<https://noticeboard.forumias.com/gsap-2023/>

Important -

- Answers must be attempted in the QCA Booklet only.
- To upload the Answer Copies please visit to "My Course" section on -
<https://academy.forumias.com/>
- Only those copies will be evaluated which will be submitted before the next class.

Q. No.	Grade/Score
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Overall Grade/Score	

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Start Writing Here

Q.1) Multiplicity of Commissions for vulnerable sections of the society has led to duplication of efforts and all these Commissions should be merged in NHRC. Critically Examine?

Vulnerable sections of society include those who are more susceptible to exploitation & deprivation. They include SCs, STs, women, children, Transgender etc.

There are multiple Commissions dealing with vulnerable sections provided by Constitution & laws. For ex

- 1- Article 338 provides for National Commission for Scheduled Castes
- 2- Article 338 A provides for National Commission for Scheduled Tribes
- 3- Transgender Act 2019 ~~for~~ provide for National Commission on Transgender

NHRC was established as a statutory body in 1993 with mandate to protect rights human rights, enquire about violation of same & recommend government on human rights matter

It has been argued to merge multiple Commissions for vulnerable sections into NHRC

Pros of such step merger

~~for often overlapping & con~~

- 1- Synergize the functioning of multiple Commissions under one umbrella body for better protection & service delivery for vulnerable sections

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- 2- Overlapping & conflicting Jurisdiction of multiple Commissions are resolved under one umbrella body
- 3- Better targeting of vulnerable sections & dealing with issues of intersectional vulnerability via a single nodal authority
- 4- Better utilization of human resources & preventing duplication of efforts while targeting vulnerable sections

Cons of merger

- 1- Conflict may arise while dealing with different vulnerable sections due to their different Socio Economic needs
- 2- Overburdening of NHRC with multitude of cases & thus time taking Justice delivery
- 3- Intersectional vulnerability & inequality may increase if proper focus not given to each & every vulnerable group

Thus based on above pros and cons, it is better to synergize the functioning of multiple commissions instead of merging them into NHRC

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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Q.2) COVID 19 has increased educational inequality in India. Examine this statement along with remedial measures?

COVID 19 pandemic led to country wide stringent lockdown in 2020 which led to closure of schools for most of 2020 & early 2021.

This closure of schools severely affected educational outcomes of children

It led to increased educational inequality in India as founded by Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2020

1 - More than 5% of rural children were not enrolled in school in 2020 as compared to less than 2% in 2018

2 - Only 11% of rural children had access to online live / recorded classes ~~as compared~~ which was much higher for students enrolled in urban private schools

3 - As per latest UDISE+ report of 2022, enrollment in pre primary schools dropped by 30% compared to pre pandemic level

Major Causes of for increased inequality

1 - Economic causes - COVID 19 led to job loss, livelihood loss which led to children dropping out of school & forced in child labour

2- Digital Divide - Urban tele density is 137% & rural tele density is 55%. (As per latest TRAI report) which further exacerbated digital divide and led to unequal access to education for rural & urban students

3- During COVID19 pandemic there was a shift of students from private school to public school which further intensified their plight as online education in public schools was at bare minimum level raising educational inequality

Remedial measures

1- After reopening of schools, a comprehensive assessment should be carried to assess every child's educational level and then specific learning programs curated to their needs should be provided to bridge the inequality

2- Digital Divide should be bridged between rural and urban areas, between private & public schools

3- Provision of digital public goods should be made to most vulnerable and disadvantaged section of society to deal with any future disruptions in education

Education is ornament in prosperity and a refuge in Adversity (by Aristotle). Thus above remedies should be provided for holistic development of Youth

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Poor			Average			Good		
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Q.3) Technology has changed the nature of education system in India. In the light of this statement mention some government and non gov. digital education initiatives

Traditionally education system in India was majority confined to class rooms mode, however ever evolving Technology has changed the nature of education system in India which was further intensified during COVID 19 pandemic

Changes due to technological evolution of Education System

- 1- Online live / Recorded classes
- 2- Use of Augmented Reality / Virtual Reality for immersive education
- 3- Use of data analytics for deep insights into one's learning potential and behaviour
self paced
- 4- learning programs curated to one's need and potential

These technological evolution have a deep impact in current education system and many Government and non government initiatives have been taken to further this cause

Government initiatives

- 1- SWAYAM Portal for MOOC's & skill development
- 2- SWAYAM Prabha which provide 34 free DTH

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Channels for educating students in various competitive programmes Exams

3- PM-SHRI - PM schools for Rising India aims to develop more than 14000 schools with state of the art digital infrastructure

Non Government Digital Initiatives

1- STARs program of World Bank - To provide monetary & management support to selected schools to develop them in line with NEP 2020

2- Initiatives by Edutech platforms - Initiatives like ~~unacademy~~ unacademy's One Platform, BYJU's Education etc. for all, Physicswallah cheap coaching program, all aims for digital education to be accessible, affordable & available

Way forward

- 1) Bridge the rural urban digital divide by creating infrastructure
- 2) Awareness program for parents to make them realize about ~~changing~~ evolving educational system and their role in their child's education.

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Q14

Urbanisation is not a problem by default rather it is a government's response towards urbanization that is a problem. Comment

Urbanisation refers to physical movement of people due to various push and pull factors from a rural area to urban area.

As per Census 2011, 32% of India's population lives in urban area and it is expected to rise to 40% by 2030 (as per NITI Aayog reports).

Urbanisation currently is marred by several problems ~~like~~ due to government's response to urbanization like

- 1- Unplanned development and expansion of cities
- 2- No focus on environment and disaster management in city planning
- 3- Lack of ~~so~~ basic civic amenities like sanitation facilities, clean drinking water etc.
- 4- Lack of public transport and last mile connectivity
- 5- less focus on air pollution, water pollution and solid waste management
- 6- No decentralized approach in governance of cities at ground level

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Urbanization is inevitable and it is estimated that 66% of India's GDP will be contributed by urban areas by 2030 (as per NITI Aayog)

Thus to rectify the problems of current urbanization following steps may be taken

- 1 - De centralized governance structure with transfer of 3F's - Functions, Finance and Functionaries at city level for efficient governance
- 2 - Incorporating environmental goals and disaster management plans in city development plans
- 3 - Developing necessary civic infrastructure for provision of sanitation, clean drinking water
- 4 - Development of public transport facilities with focus on last mile connectivity
- 5 - ~~A~~ A shift from 'government centric approach' to 'citizen centric approach' involving a bottom up approach instead a top down in city management & development.

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~~Q15~~ Pandemic has accelerated class inequalities and Poverty in India. Examine

As per a recent study carried out by UNDP, it is estimated that pandemic has pushed 207 million people into poverty world wide ~~and~~ taking overall count to over 1 billion

Impact of COVID 19 on inequality

- 1- As per OXFAM report of 2019, top 1% of India's population controls more than 50% of wealth and COVID 19 has deepened it further
- 2- Informal workforce which comprises more than 90% of India's workforce were affected most because of their lack of social security
- 3- As per government data, demand for MGNREGS work has increased significantly during pandemic which shows rural distress.

Impact of COVID 19 on Poverty

- 1- Migrant workers were severely affected after imposition of lockdown leading to their loss of livelihood and reverse migration which further the already stressed economy

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2- Daily wage workers, household helps, Security guards etc. were the first who lost their jobs due to social distancing norms & these sections were severely stressed economically during COVID 19 due to loss of livelihoods

3- Relatively better off sections could ride the Pandemic comfortably due to their savings.

Way Forward

1- Government steps such as PM Garib Kalyan Yojana, PM Swanidhi needs to be implemented successfully to address the plight of vulnerable sections

2- Urban Employment scheme intune of MGNREGS needs to be debated upon

3- Migrant & informal workers needs to be provided with social security to protect them from any future disruptions

As it is said, the pandemic hit the most vulnerable in its worst form, affirmative action needs to be taken to implement SDG 1 (zero poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger) & SDG 3 (good health)

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Poor			Average			Good		
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Q.6) Why India continues to perform poor in global hunger index despite adequate food stocks and statutory laws to ensure food security? Provide solutions to deal with this problem.

In its latest Global Hunger Index (GHI) released by 'Wellbeing hunger' & 'Concern Worldwide' India ranked 107/121 with a score of 29.1 & was placed in 'Serious' hunger category.

GHI is calculated based on four parameters

- i) level of ^{under}~~und~~er nutrition (1/3rd weightage)
- ii) Child wasting (1/6th weightage)
- iii) Child Stunting (")
- iv) Child mortality (1/3rd weightage)

India continues to perform poor in GHI despite adequate food stocks and statutory laws due to following reasons

- 1) level of undernutrition is measured using FAO's survey which involves a sample size of 3000 which is non representative of India's 1.4 billion population and thus India's performance is poor in this parameter

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ii) The other three ~~index~~ parameters deals with children's related issues and as contended by government cannot be extrapolated to give a picture of overall countries population

Beside these two issues related to index itself, there are several other reasons

- i) less focus on ~~protein~~ ^{intake} nutrition ~~level~~ and more on caloric intake leads to nutritional deficiencies
- ii) Most of the current government schemes focuses on provisions of rice and wheat which can cater caloric intake but fell short of nutritional requirement fulfillment
- iii) Lack of ~~anti~~ pre-natal, post-natal & neo natal care especially in rural areas leading to poor performance in child related indicators
- ~~iv)~~ Behavioural ~~parameters~~ still focuses
- iv) Absence of quality health infrastructure especially in rural areas to deal with child related health complications
- v) Issues of food availability (due to food wastage, last mile delivery), affordability (due to inflation) & accessibility

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Way Forward

- 1- Biofortification which involves adding micro nutrients in rice & wheat etc. to increase their nutritional value should be promoted & PDS should use ~~the~~ biofortified grains for distribution
- 2- Government should focus ~~the~~ on expanding the safety net provided by ICDS to all ~~the~~ vulnerable sections
- 3- More focus should be given on 112 Aspirational districts where prevalence of hunger & hidden hunger is high
- 4- Mid day meal scheme should ~~include~~ include Breakfast (as provided by Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh etc.) as studies have shown that most important meal of the day is breakfast

Hunger and especially hidden hunger is one of the most serious problem facing our society and the world as a whole, thus above mentioned steps should be taken to achieve SDG 2.0 of zero hunger

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Q.7) Despite multiple government efforts, annual status of education report underlines the sorry state of affairs in school education in India. What are the reasons behind this sub optimal performance? Also mention remedial measures?

Annual status of Education report released by Pratham Foundation gave following key observations

- 1- During 2020, 5% of rural children were out of school (in age group 6-10 yrs) up from 1.8% in 2018
- 2- Only 11% of rural children had access to online classes during pandemic
- 3- ~~Only~~ more than 20% of ^{rural} students didn't have text books at their home in 2020
- 4- Almost 75% of interactions with schools happened via whatsapp in pandemic year

The above findings shows an abysmal picture of ~~Indian~~ school education despite government efforts such as

i) Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan

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- 3- Right to Education Act 2009
- 4- Constitutional Provision of Free and Compulsory Education between age 6-14 years (Article 21A)

Reasons for Sub optimal Performance

- 1- Poverty - Incidence of Poverty & loss of livelihood increased during pandemic which forced many families to stop education of their children
- 2- Child labour - many a times, due to poverty, families force their children into child labour to generate income. (As per reports, child labour contributes upto 40% of income in poorest of households)
- 3- Child marriage - Due to economic burden, girl child are married off at a young age curtailing their education
- 4- Lack of infrastructure - Due to poor conditions of schools (many a times lacking even basic civic facilities) children opt out of school
- 5- Many a times child in school faces discrimination due to their low learning ability which forces them to opt out of education & pursue work

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Remedial Actions

- 1- laws related to child labour & child marriage needs to enforced stringently to prevent school dropouts
- 2- Infrastructure of schools needs to be improved to cater to 21st century needs of education
- 3- Special attention should be given towards disadvantaged children via extra classes
- 4- Awareness regarding importance of education needs to be provided to parents. As per studies, every extra year of schooling can enhance earning potential of a person by 9%.
- 5- Digital divide between urban & rural, Public & Private schools needs to be bridged

Education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity (Aristotle) Thus above mentioned steps needs to be pursued on war footing to achieve SDG 4.0 of Quality Education

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
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