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Category: INDIAN SOCIETY

1. [Liberalization's impact on gender discrimination](#)

Context:

- Conventional wisdom suggests that economic reforms succeeding liberalization policy of government in early 1990s should have reduced gender discrimination—but that hasn't really been the case.
- India's gender balance in entrepreneurship and jobs remains among the lowest in the world.
- Globalization and trade policy have made a limited contribution towards India's convergence in gender segmentation.

Liberalization and gender Discrimination:

- Increased market competition, forces firms to eliminate inefficient discriminatory practices, including gender discrimination
- Market competition works in favour of women, as women are more competitive, and offer cheaper and more flexible labour vis-à-vis men.

Present trends:

- The share of females in manufacturing employment has barely increased over the last two decades. Female activity is largely concentrated in the unorganized sector.
- Women entrepreneurs are more dominant in industries that pay lower average wages.
- Despite many competitive reforms that India has undertaken, this pattern of gender-based segmentation has been accentuated over the years.

Manufacturing Sector

- The female ownership shares are highest and typically exceed 50% in industries related to chemicals and chemical products, tobacco products, and paper and paper products.
- At the opposite end, female ownership shares are 2% or less in industries related to computers, motor vehicles, fabricated metal products, and machinery and equipment.

Service sector

- Among service industries, female ownership shares exceed 30% in industries related to sanitation and education. Industries related to research and development, water transport, and land transport have the lowest female ownership rates, at 1% or less.
- The female ownership rates in major cities tend to be higher than overall state averages.
- The states with the highest female service sector ownership rates are Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh, with average female ownership shares exceeding 12%.
- The lowest female ownership rates are in Rajasthan, Bihar, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh, each with 6% or less. It is surprising that the nation's capital, Delhi, has the lowest share of female-owned establishments in manufacturing. Its position in the services sector is only slightly above the national average.

Factors Affecting Female Entry into various Industries

- Empirical results suggest that a district/industry with more incumbent female employment has a greater female entry share. Among district-level traits, a higher female-to-male ratio, an age profile emphasizing working age population, and better quality infrastructure appear important.
- Inadequate infrastructure also affects women more than men, because women are often responsible for a larger share of, and often more time-consuming, household activities.
- In particular, transport infrastructure and paved roads within villages play an important role. Travel in India can be restrictive and unpredictable, and women face greater constraints in geographic mobility imposed by safety concerns and social norms.
- Better electricity and water access may reduce the burden of women in providing essential household inputs for their families, and allow for more time to be directed toward entrepreneurial activities.

Way forward:

- India's 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, passed in 1992, instituted one-third seat reservations for women in local governance bodies. The political empowerment of women had huge beneficial effects. The political reservation for women has gained India global recognition.
- India's economic liberalization and increased market competition has not eliminated gender segmentation. However, improved physical and human infrastructure, and domestic pro-competitive reforms have reduced gender segmentation.
- Gender will play a bigger and more strategic role in India's future growth.
- This growth will come in many forms: increased female labour force participation, improvements in productivity, elimination of gender discrimination in access to bank loans, and increased voice and political representation.
- Simply put, empowering half of the potential workforce has significant economic benefits beyond promoting gender equality.

Category: POLITY

1. [Y.C. Modi, CBI special director case, named NIA chief](#)

In news:

- The appointments committee of the cabinet (ACC) named senior IPS officer Y.C. Modi to head the **National Investigation Agency (NIA)**, according to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).
- Modi, a 1984 batch IPS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, was part of the Supreme Court-appointed special investigation team that probed the 2002 Gujarat riot cases.
- Modi currently works as special director in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Basic Information:

National Investigation Agency:

- National Investigation Agency (NIA) is a central agency established by the Indian Government to combat terror in India.
- It acts as the Central Counter Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency.
- **The agency is empowered to deal with terror related crimes across states without special permission from the states.**
- The Agency came into existence with the enactment of the National Investigation Agency Act 2008 by the Parliament of India on 31 December 2008.
- NIA was created after the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks as need for a central agency to combat terrorism was realised.

Jurisdiction:

- The Agency has been empowered to conduct investigation and prosecution of offences under the Acts specified in the Schedule of the NIA Act.
- A State Government may request the Central Government to hand over the investigation of a case to the NIA, provided the case has been registered for the offenses as contained in the schedule to the NIA Act.

Central Government can also order NIA to take over investigation of any scheduled offense anywhere in the India. Officers of the NIA who are drawn from the Indian Revenue Service, Indian Police Service, state police, Income Tax as well as officers from the Central Armed Police Forces, have all powers, privileges and liabilities which the police officers have in connection with investigation of any offence.

2. [Rethinking police reform](#)

Context:

- State police forces in India are among the least trusted public institutions
- “Can anything be done?”

Background

- According to the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD), there are 15,268 police stations in India
- These stations are organized under various administrative units like circles, subdivisions, districts, ranges and zones
- The median ratio of police officers to constabulary is 5%

Key stats:

- There are a total of about 1.8 million police personnel employed by Indian state police organizations today and there are also 300,000 vacancies

- This results in a median 200 policemen for every 100,000 people, though it ranges widely from 76 in Bihar to 700 in Delhi

Solutions:

- Dealing with 21st century challenges with the (currently applicable) Police Act of 1861 creates lots of issues
- The politicization of the police is a tough problem to solve in an environment in which money, votes, and instruments of intimidation (misuse of the police) mix
- According to a Takshashila Institution survey of public trust, state police organizations rank last among government organizations and agencies
- Numerous committees and commissions have opined on the issue of police reform
- Most of them have approached the problem from a quantity, capacity, capability, training, compensation and benefits point of view
- The solutions may generally be grouped into the idea of “if you make the policeman’s conditions better, then everything will improve”

Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) and police reforms:

- The ARC recommended that the investigative functions of police be separated from the day-to-day law and order functions
- And the superintendence of the government over police be restricted in such a manner that the force retains operational autonomy
- It suggested a State Accountability Commission made up of five members of government, including the home minister and chief secretary and five non-partisan eminent citizens
- The ARC recommendation resolved the politicization dilemma by delegating operational control to the force and democratizing governance to a commission

Way forward:

- Codifying checks and balances in respective police Acts will bring assurance against illegal orders by the political establishment to the police
- Currently, politicians use the power of the police for their purposes, but sidestep any responsibility for their failures
- Only by giving full accountability to the politicians can society hold the politicians responsible for their actions
- Only when full political accountability joints with the betterment in capacity, capability and equipment can we begin true police reform

Category: ECONOMY

1. [Shell shock: Govt. “names and shames” directors](#)

Context:

- Ministry of Corporate Affairs has identified 1.06 lakh directors of “shell companies” for disqualification under the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013.
- The move is part of actions to break the network of “shell companies” and further the fight against **black money/money laundering**

In news:

- “**Name and shame**” **exercise:** Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MoCA) has begun making public the lists of disqualified directors across the nation as well as those associated with struck-off companies.
- The disqualified in the lists are those who are, or had been a director, in a company that has not filed financial statements or annual returns for any continuous period of three financial years. Such directors will not be eligible for re-appointment as a director in that company or for appointment in other companies for five years from the date of non-compliance.
- Several Keralite businessmen, leading politicians, top civil servants and police officers figured in the lists.

Category: ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND ECOLOGY

1. [Giant sea snail plan to rescue Barrier Reef](#)

Context:

- Great Barrier Reef: Saving the corals.

In news:

- A giant starfish-eating snail (Pacific triton sea snail “also known as the giant triton) could be unleashed to help save the Great Barrier Reef.
- Predatory crown-of-thorns starfish, which munch coral, are naturally-occurring but have proliferated due to pollution and run-off at the struggling World Heritage-listed ecosystem
- A major study of the 2,300-km long reef’s health in 2012 shows coral cover halved over the past 27 years, with 42% of the damage attributed to the crown-of-thorns starfish.
- The snails, which can grow to half a metre, have a well developed sense of smell and can hunt their prey by scent alone.

Nothing here for Today!!!

Category: ARTICLES AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS IN NEWS

Article 191. Disqualifications for membership

(1) A person shall be disqualified for being chosen as, and for being, a member of the Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council of a State

(a) if he holds any office of profit under the Government of India or the Government of any State specified in the First Schedule, other than an office declared by the Legislature of the State by law not to disqualify its holder;

(b) if he is of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court;

(c) if he is an undischarged insolvent;

(d) if he is not a citizen of India, or has voluntarily acquired the citizenship of a foreign State, or is under any acknowledgement of allegiance or adherence to a foreign State;

(e) if he is so disqualified by or under any law made by Parliament Explanation For the purposes of this clause, a person shall not be deemed to hold an office of profit under the Government of India or the Government of any State specified in the First Schedule by reason only that he is a Minister either for the Union or for such State

(2) A person shall be disqualified for being a member of the Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council of a State if he is so disqualified under the Tenth Schedule

F. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

G. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

GS Paper I

1. “Conventional wisdom suggests that economic reforms succeeding liberalization policy of government in early 1990s should have reduced gender discrimination” but that hasn’t really been the case. Discuss?

GS Paper II

1. “Codifying checks and balances in respective police Acts will bring assurance against illegal orders by the political establishment to the police”. Discuss.