



News Analysis (20 Nov, 2018)

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World Toilet Day

World Toilet Day is celebrated every year on 19 November.

- In 2013, the **United Nations General Assembly officially designated November 19 as World Toilet Day**. It is **coordinated by UN-Water** in collaboration with governments and partners.
- It is a day that seeks to engage and educate people and their communities worldwide to encourage support for sanitation-related issues.
- It also aims to **break the stigma around sanitation** as the silence around the issue of toilets and sanitation has deadly consequences.
- The theme of World Toilet Day-2018 is “ **When Nature Calls**” which emphasizes that when nature calls, toilet is needed but billions of people don't have toilets.
- Human faeces, on a massive scale, are not being captured or treated, contaminating the water and soil that sustain human life.

The Sanitation Crisis

- Toilets save lives, because human waste spreads killer diseases. World Toilet Day is about inspiring action to tackle the global sanitation crisis.
- Today, globally **4.5 billion people live without a safe toilet** and 892 million people still practise open defecation.
- **SDG 6** aims to ensure that everyone has a **safe toilet** and that **no-one practices open defecation by 2030**. Failure to achieve this goal risks the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The impact of exposure to human faeces on this scale has a **devastating impact on public health**, living and working conditions, nutrition, education and economic productivity across the world.
- Sanitation is important for preventing many diseases including diarrhoea, intestinal worms, schistosomiasis and trachoma.

- Universal access to sanitation in households and schools is essential in:
 - Reducing diseases
 - Improving nutritional status of children
 - Enhancing safety, and well-being of children
 - Increasing educational prospects, especially for women and girls

Significance for India

- Sanitation is a serious issue in India, with **more than 60% of Indians still defecate in the open**, and more than 80 million people in urban areas still do not have access to safe toilets.
- Over one lakh **children die in India due to diarrhoea-related diseases**, close to 20% of the global statistic of child deaths due to diarrhoea, and the World Health Organization (WHO) has stated that 90% of these deaths **can be directly attributed to improper sanitation facilities**.
- From an economic perspective, the **inadequate urban sanitation** has led to a **financial loss to the economy** equivalent to 6.4% of India's Gross domestic product (GDP).
- Further, hundreds of **manual scavengers** who scrape the waste with their bare hands without any protective gear or masks, die each year cleaning out sewers in cities across India.
- **Community toilet blocks (CTB)** can enable access, but the **distance of the CTB from the home** can deter its usage and cast a shadow on its **safety**, especially for **women**.
- On average, women and girls hold their bladders for more than 13 hours a day, leading to many reproductive and urinary tract infections.
- Many women in India also prefer liquid meals for dinner, eat less and restrict water intake due to the lack of safety of CTBs during the night.

Way Forward

- **Nature-based sanitation solutions (NBS)** should be encouraged which harness the power of ecosystems to help treat human waste before it returns to the environment.
- Most NBS essentially involve the protection and management of vegetation, soils and/or wetlands, including rivers and lakes. For instance:
 - **Composting** latrines that capture and treat human waste on site, producing a free supply of fertiliser to help grow crops etc.
 - **Human-made wetlands** and reed-beds **filter wastewater** before it is released back into water courses.
- **Behavioral change** should be focussed upon by the government along with the construction of toilets under Swachh Bharat Mission (launched on 2 October 2014) which is aimed to eliminate open defecation by 2019.

- **Technological solutions** should be leveraged for sustainable solution of sanitation and hygiene. For instance:
 - Recently a machine launched by Sulabh International (a social service organization) can be adopted for eliminating manual scavenging. The machine injects high-pressure water into the tunnels and tanks and then collects the waste with a mechanical bucket operated from ground level. A remote control inspection camera generates high-resolution images of the sewer system.
 - **Reinvented toilets** promoted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation can be adopted. Reinvented toilets are special as they turn liquid waste into clear water for flushing, and solids into pellets or ash that is fertilizer.
 - While the reinvented toilet gets optimized, India should, in parallel, look at **Omni processors for faecal sludge treatment plants (FSTP)**. These zero emission processors will end dumping of faecal sludge taken from septic tanks into rivers, lakes, farms and open spaces. They can also prevent the death of workers in septic tanks.
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PM Visit to Maldives

Recently, Prime Minister of India visited Maldives to attend the swearing-in ceremony of newly elected President of Maldives Ibrahim Mohamed Solih.

- It is the **first visit by Mr. Narendra Modi** to Maldives in his four year tenure as PM.
- The visit has given new impetus to the Indian ties with Maldives which were facing a number of challenges in last few years.
- The new government has taken few major steps to ensure India its importance in Maldives Affair.
- The Maldives' new government has decided to **pull out of a free trade agreement (FTA) with China** which was signed in December 2017.
- Maldives government has said that they will follow 'India First Policy'. 2 Indian military choppers, which were gifted by India to Maldives will not be returned to India.
- Maldives strategic return to India and its underlying democratic values could now prevent the economic crisis that Maldives will face when China will ask Maldives to pay back the debt.

- PM also held a brief bilateral talks with newly elected President after the ceremony. Outcome of talks:
 - Both expressed the importance of maintaining peace and security in Indian ocean
 - Both countries decided to be mindful of each other's concerns and aspirations for stability of region
 - Both countries have decided to show commitment and support for increased cooperation in combating terrorism within the region and elsewhere.
 - India ensured Maldives of its commitment in assisting the Maldives to achieve sustainable social and economic development.
 - To work towards easier visa facilities.

India-Maldives Relation

- India and the Maldives share deep historical, cultural, and economic ties.
 - India was among the first to recognize the Maldives after its independence in 1965 and to establish diplomatic relations with the country. India established its mission at Malé in 1972.
 - India's bilateral and financial assistance to the Maldives has been reciprocated through an **"India first" policy by the Maldives.**
 - Importance of the Maldives for India:
 - Maldives is an important aspect of India's **'Neighbourhood First' policy.**
 - **Strategically located in the Indian Ocean,** Maldives archipelago comprising 1200 coral Islands lies next to key shipping lanes which ensure uninterrupted energy supplies to countries like China, Japan, and India. More than 97% of India's international trade by volume and 75% by value passes through the region.
 - As the pre-eminent South Asian power and a **'net security provider' in the Indian Ocean region,** India needs to cooperate with the Maldives in security and defense sectors.
 - India is also a preferred destination for Maldivians for education, medical treatment, recreation, and business.
 - **Maldives is also a member of SAARC.** It is important for India to have the Maldives on board to maintain its leadership in the region.
 - Since China's naval expansion into the Indian Ocean - Maldives significance has steadily grown and now it's at the heart of international geopolitics.
 - There is **significant Indian diaspora in Maldives.** Innumerable Indians work across the hospitality, education, and health-care sectors of the Maldives economy.
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Recently, **World Health Organisation (WHO)** has released **World Malaria Report, 2018**.

- The report has mentioned that the number of cases of the disease increased by 2 million to 219 million in 2017 from 217 million cases in 2016.
- In 2017 Malaria killed 4,35,000 people, majority of them childrens.
- Malaria occurs in 91 countries but about 90% of the cases and deaths are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Major Findings of the Report

- **Malaria cases**

- Fifteen countries in **sub-Saharan Africa and India carried almost 80% of the global malaria burden.**
- Five countries accounted for nearly half of **all malaria cases** worldwide: Nigeria (25%), Democratic Republic of the Congo (11%), Mozambique (5%), **India (4%)** and Uganda (4%)

- **Malaria deaths**

- In 2017, there were an estimated 435 000 deaths from malaria globally, compared with 451 000 estimated deaths in 2016.
- Nearly 80% of **global malaria deaths** in 2017 were concentrated in 17 countries in the WHO African Region and India. **India accounted for 4% of global malaria deaths.**

- **Malaria-related anaemia**

The 2018 report includes a section on **malaria-related anaemia**, a condition that, left untreated, can result in death, especially among vulnerable populations such as pregnant women and children aged under 5 years.

- **Challenges in Global Malaria Response**

- High Burden Countries**

- In 2017, **11 countries accounted for approximately 70% of estimated malaria cases** and deaths globally: **10 in sub-Saharan Africa and India.**
- **Among these countries, only India reported progress in reducing its malaria cases in 2017 compared to 2016.**

High Burden to High Impact

- WHO also released a new country-driven approach – “High burden to high impact” to enhance response to malaria in countries where Malaria cases increased in 2017 as compared to 2016.

- Catalyzed by WHO and the RBM Partnership to End Malaria, the approach is founded upon four pillars:
 - galvanize national and global political attention to reduce malaria deaths;
 - drive impact in country through the strategic use of information;
 - establish best global guidance, policies and strategies suitable for all malaria endemic countries;
 - implement a coordinated country response
- “High burden to high impact” calls for increased funding, with an emphasis on domestic funding for malaria, and better targeting of resources.
- **Decline in Funding**

In 24 out of 41 high-burden countries, which rely on external funding for malaria programmes, the average level of funding available per person at risk declined in 2015–2017 compared to 2012–2014.
- **Drug Resistance**

Artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACTs) have been integral to the recent success of global malaria control, and protecting their efficacy for the treatment of malaria is a global health priority.
- **Insecticide Resistance**
 - Of the 80 malaria endemic countries that provided data for 2010–2017, resistance to at least one of the four insecticide classes in one malaria vector from collection site was detected in 68 countries.
 - In view of the current situation, **resistance monitoring and management plans are essential**, in line with the WHO Global plan for insecticide resistance management in malaria vectors.

National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination (NSPME) (2017-22)

- Government of India has launched **NSPME (2017-22)**.
- The Strategic Plan gives year wise elimination targets in various parts of the country depending upon the endemicity of malaria in the next 5 years.
- The NSPME is based on **National Framework for Malaria Elimination 2016** which is in line with **WHO’s Global Technical Strategy for Malaria, 2016-2030**.

- **Strategy to Eradicate Malaria**

- The NSP divides the country into four categories, from 0 to 3. The plan is to eliminate malaria (zero indigenous cases) by 2022 in all Category 1 and 2 districts.
- The remaining districts are to be brought under a pre-elimination and elimination programme.
- The NSP also aims to maintain a malaria-free status for areas where transmission has been interrupted.
- It seeks to achieve universal case detection and treatment services in endemic districts to ensure 100% diagnosis of all suspected cases, and full treatment of all confirmed cases.
- The plan has four components, based on WHO recommendations: diagnosis and case management; surveillance and epidemic response; prevention — integrated vector management; ‘cross-cutting’ interventions, which include advocacy, communication, research and development and other initiatives

Global Education Monitoring Report-2019 : UNESCO

Recently, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) released its **Global Education Monitoring Report 2019 titled- “Migration, Displacement and Education: Building Bridges, not Walls”**.

Highlights

- The report highlights **countries’ achievements and shortcomings** in ensuring the right of migrant and refugee children to benefit from quality education.
- The number of migrant and refugee school-age children around the world in 2018 **has grown by 26% since 2000** and could fill half a million classrooms.
- The right of these children to quality education, even if increasingly recognized on paper, is challenged in practical. The two years since the landmark **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in 2016**, refugees have missed 1.5 billion days of school.

New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in 2016

- On **September 19, 2016, the United Nations General Assembly** unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.
- The New York Declaration reaffirms the **importance of the international refugee regime** and contains a wide range of **commitments by Member States** to strengthen and enhance mechanisms to protect people on the move.

- It has paved the way for the adoption of **two new global compacts in 2018**:
 - a global compact on **refugees** and
 - a global compact for **safe, orderly and regular migration**.
- It also warns of the **negative impact on education** for children who are left behind as their parents migrate. Test scores were lower among left-behind children aged 5-8.
- Nevertheless, there **has been progress in the inclusion of refugees in national education systems**, as seen in eight of the top ten refugee hosting countries. **Canada and Ireland** are among the global leaders in implementing inclusive education policies for immigrants.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

- **UNESCO, formed in 1945**, is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris. Its declared purpose is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through educational, scientific, and cultural reforms in order to increase universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights along with fundamental freedom proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.
- UNESCO has **195 member states** and ten associate members.
- India was a **founder member** of the Organisation.

India Specific Findings

- Literacy levels in **rural households of India dip with seasonal migration**. About 80% of seasonal migrant children in major cities lacked access to education near work sites, and 40% are likely to end up in work rather than education, experiencing abuse and exploitation.
- The **construction sector absorbs the majority** of short-term migrants. About 77% of kiln workers reported lack of access to early childhood or primary education for their children.
- It lauds **Right to Education Act in 2009** which made it **mandatory** for local authorities to **admit migrant children**. National-level guidelines were issued, allowing for flexible admission of children, providing transport and volunteers to support with mobile education, create seasonal hostels and improve coordination between sending and receiving districts and states.
- The report says some State governments have also taken steps for migrant children's education. However, most interventions are focused on keeping children in home communities instead of actively addressing the challenges faced by those who are already on the move.
- It also talks about challenges wherein the progress of out-of-school children did not improve learning in any substantial way. Teachers on the sites **cited culture, language, lifestyle, cleanliness and clothing as major barriers between them and the kiln labour community**. Teacher and student **absenteeism** were rampant.

- The report sees the growth of **slums and informal settlements** where schools are often **scarce** due to migration as a challenge.

Recommendations

- Protect the **right to education of migrants and displaced people**.
- Include **migrants and displaced people** in the national education system.
- Understand and plan to meet the **education needs of migrants and displaced people**.
- Represent **migration and displacement histories** in education accurately to challenge prejudices.
- **Prepare teachers** of migrants and refugees to address diversity and hardship.
- Harness the **potential of migrants and displaced people**.
- Support **education needs** of migrants and displaced people **in humanitarian and development aid**.

Conclusion

- India, along with China, is home to some of the **world's largest internal population movements** and the report shows that the scale of seasonal migration has a significant impact on education.
- Therefore, the UNESCO report **urges policy makers to strengthen public education** for rural migrant children living in slums.
- Migration and displacement are two global challenges that needs to be addressed in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in general and **SDG 4, i.e. 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all', in particular**.

Important Facts for Prelims (20th November 2018)

Horned Frogs Discovered by DU team

- A team of biologists from Delhi University (DU), University College Dublin (Ireland) and the National Museum (UK) have discovered **four new species of horned frogs** from the **Himalayan regions of Northeast India**.
- The team also comprised **S D Biju** from DU's Department of Environmental Studies, known as the '**Frogman of India**'.
- Horned frogs get their name from the fleshy horn-like projection on the upper eyelids of some species, and were discovered in the **forests of Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh**.

- The scientists named the four new Indian species as **Himalayan horned frog** (*Megophrys himalayana*); the **Garo white-lipped horned frog** (*Megophrys oreocrypta*); the **Yellow spotted white-lipped horned frog** (*Megophrys flavipunctata*); and the **Giant Himalayan horned frog** (*Megophrys periosa*).

India's First Elephant Hospital in Mathura

- India's **first specialized hospital for elephants** was opened in **Mathura (Uttar Pradesh)**.
- The hospital armed with facilities such as **wireless digital X-Ray, thermal imaging, ultrasonography, tranquilization devices and quarantine facilities**, has not only come as a respite to the elephants but is also attracting local and foreign tourists.
- Located close to the elephant conservation and care centre, the hospital is **designed to treat injured, sick or geriatric elephants** and is equipped with a medical hoist for lifting elephants.

Solar Bubble Dryer

- An innovative drying technology, Solar Bubble Dryer (SBD), developed jointly by **International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines**; Grainpro, a leading post-harvest solution providing company; and University of Hohenheim, Germany, was introduced to farmers in Odisha.
- The SBD is a **low-cost drying technology** that aims to provide a **simple and flexible alternative to sun-drying** while protecting from spillage, animals, weather and vehicles running over the grains.
- The new technology has been developed in such a way that farmers can dismantle the machinery and reassemble it on their own. Power can be drawn both from solar energy and traditional electricity.

Elephant Corridors as ESZ

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) to consider declaring all elephant corridors in the country as Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZ).
- Eco-Sensitive Zones or Ecologically Fragile Areas are areas **notified by MoEFCC around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries**.
- Activities conducted in eco-sensitive zones are **regulated under the Environment (Protection Act) of 1986** and no polluting industry or mine is allowed to come up in such areas.

- As a general principle width of the eco-sensitive zone could go up to 10 km around a protected area. In case of places with sensitive corridors, connectivity and ecologically important patches, crucial for landscape linkage, even area beyond 10 km width can also be included in the eco-sensitive zone.
 - The guidelines **prohibit activities such as commercial mining, commercial use of firewood and major hydropower projects.**
 - The basic aim is to regulate certain activities around National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries so as to minimise the negative impacts of such activities on the fragile ecosystem encompassing the protected areas.
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