

# 08 July 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

## 50 years of partnership with UNWFP

### Context

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, launched a Coffee Table Book, to commemorate five decades of partnership between the Ministry and UNWFP in addressing food and nutritional security in India.

### UNWFP

- The World Food Programme (WFP) is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations and the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security.
- According to the WFP, it provides food assistance to an average of 91.4 million people in 83 countries each year.
- From its headquarters in Rome and from more than 80 country offices around the world, the WFP works to help people who cannot produce or obtain enough food for themselves and their families.
- It is a member of the United Nations Development Group and part of its executive committee.

### WFP in India

- WFP is working to improve the efficiency, accountability and transparency of India's own subsidized food distribution system, which brings supplies of wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene oil to around 800 million poor people across the country.
- WFP ensures that food reaches those who need it most, working with the Government to reform and strengthen the system, which is one of the world's largest.
- To boost the nutritional value of the Government's Midday Meal school feeding programme, WFP is pioneering the multi-micronutrient fortification of school meals.
- The pilot project saw rice fortified with iron, which was distributed in a single district, resulting in a 20 percent drop in anaemia.
- WFP also help tackle malnutrition by fortifying food given to babies and young children in the Kerala State.
- WFP uses its own Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping software to identify India's most food insecure areas, which allows policy and relief work to be targeted appropriately.
- WFP is also supporting the government's Poverty and Human Development Monitoring Agency in establishing a State-level Food Security Analysis Unit, working towards the goal of achieving

## 550th birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji

### Context

- Union Cabinet has decided to celebrate 550th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Devji at national and international level.

### Biography

- Guru Nanak was born on 15 April 1469 at Nankana Sahib, Punjab, Pakistan to a Hindu family. His father was a crop revenue accountant. Guru Nanak's birth anniversary is celebrated as Guru Nanak Gurpurab by Sikhs all over the world.
- Even though Guru Nanak worked as an accountant for a while, he was drawn towards spiritualism and showed a spiritual and intellectual side from a young age. According to Sikh traditions, there were events in his early life which distinguished him from others and confirmed that he was special.
- He studied both Hinduism and Islam.
- Guru Nanak introduced the concept of langar where everybody partakes of a meal as equals. This is a tradition continued by Sikhs till date in Gurudwaras. This practice symbolises charity and equality.
- He travelled to many places like Mecca, Baghdad, Multan, etc.

### Guru Nanak's Teachings

- There is only one god – a tenet that is stressed upon in the saying 'Ik Onkar'. This is the phrase used in Sikhism to refer to the one Supreme Being that controls the universe.
- Guru Nanak was against caste-based distinctions. He also denied the need for priests and rituals.
- He said that he was not an incarnation of god or even a prophet, but that everyone could 'speak' to god directly. The concept of god is 'Vahiguru', an entity that is shapeless, timeless, omnipresent and invisible. Other names for God in the Sikh faith are Akaal Purkh and Nirankar.
- He laid great stress on purity of character and actions.
- Sikhism also lays a lot of importance to charity and selfless service.
- Many concepts of Hinduism are also seen in Sikhism such as the concept of Maya, Kali Yuga, Jivamukta (salvation), reincarnation and karma.
- Many believe Sikhism to be a bridge between Hinduism and Islam.
- Guru Nanak denounced idol worship and pilgrimages.

# Caste Based Discrimination in Higher Education

## Context

- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)/Universities are autonomous bodies which are governed by their own Acts and the Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations.
- The Central Government as well as UGC have issued several instructions from time to time to all State Governments and Centrally Funded Education Institutions to curb discrimination of any kind in HEIs.

## Initiatives by UGC

- In order to check discrimination and harassment of any section of students and to strengthen the grievance redressal mechanism, the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2012.
- UGC Regulations are intended to give effect in letter and spirit to the provisions of the Constitution and other statutory provisions and policies for prevention of discrimination on the grounds of caste and to safeguard the interests of the students belonging to the SC and ST.
- In order to make the universities/colleges more responsive to the needs and constraints of the disadvantaged social groups, the UGC is giving financial assistance to all eligible Colleges/Universities to establish Equal Opportunity Centres.
- UGC has also approved establishment of SC/ST Cells in various Universities with a view to safeguard the interests of SC/ST students.
- Other initiatives include provision of Anti Discriminatory faculty advisors for SC/ST students who look into their problems and advise accordingly.

## AICTE initiatives

- For protection against harassment and discrimination of Scheduled Castes in AICTE Approved Institutions, it is essential for all AICTE approved institutions to Establish Committee for SC/ ST
- As per AICTE norms each (AICTE approved) Institution shall upload the number of complaints and grievances received and action taken on their Web site and update AICTB through the monthly online status report.
- In case of receipt of any complaint(s) about an Institution, the same shall be processed by Public Grievance Redressal Cell (PGRC) of AICTE established to dispose of the complaint cases.
- AICTE takes action against such institutions (AICTE Approved) for violation of AICTE norms as mentioned in Chapter VII of the Approval Process Handbook (APH) of year concerned and punishes them as appropriate.

## New 4 year Integrated ITEP

### Context

- The Central Government has introduced a 4-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) for pre-service training, to offer graduation with certain specializations built into it namely Primary and Secondary Education.

### Initiatives to improve the quality of education

- The Central Government has launched an Integrated Scheme for School Education – Samagra Shiksha, which subsumes the erstwhile centrally sponsored schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE).
- In order to focus on quality education, the Central rules to the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act have been amended to include reference on class-wise, subject-wise Learning Outcomes for all elementary classes.
- Government of India has decided to participate in the Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) to be conducted by OECD
- Approval has been given for conducting a Census based audit called Shagunotsav of all government and government aided schools in all States and UTs.
- The online D.El.Ed. course was started and most teachers have successfully completed the training.
- MHRD has designed a 70 indicators-based matrix Performance Grading Index (PGI) to grade the States and UTs.
- In 2019-20, approval has been given for setting up Youth and Eco Club in all Government Schools across the country.

## Nation Wide Online Platform for Job Seekers

### Context

- Employment generation coupled with improving employability is the priority of the Government.
- Government has taken various steps for generating employment in the country like encouraging private sector of economy, fast-tracking various projects involving substantial investment and increasing public expenditure on schemes

### **Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY)**

- This initiative has been launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment for incentivising employers for promoting employment generation.
- Under this scheme, Government is paying entire employer's contribution (12% or as admissible) towards EPF and EPS for all eligible new employees for all sectors for 3 years.

### **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)**

- This was initiated by Government inter alia for facilitating self-employment.
- Under PMMY collateral free loans upto Rs. 10 lakh, are extended to micro/small business enterprises and to individuals to enable them to setup or expand their business activities.

### **National Career Service (NCS)**

- Government has implemented the Project which comprises a digital portal that provides a nation-wide online platform for the job seekers and employers for job-matching in a dynamic, efficient and responsive manner and has a repository of career content to job seekers.

### **Start-up India**

- This is a flagship initiative of the Government of India, intended to build a strong ecosystem that is conducive for the growth of start-up businesses, to drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities.

## **Labour Reforms Bill**

### **Context**

- The Ministry has taken steps for drafting four Labour Codes on Wages; Industrial Relations; Social Security; and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions respectively, by simplifying, and amending the relevant provisions of the existing Central Labour Laws.

### **4 Labour Codes**

- The 4 Labour Codes contain provisions relating to wage, social security, safety, health and grievance redressal mechanism for workers.
- These initiatives are expected to provide wage security, social security, occupational safety and decent working conditions to the workers.
- The proposed labour reforms initiatives will reduce the complexity in compliance due to multiplicity of labour laws and facilitate setting up of enterprises and thus creating the environment for development of business and industry in the country and generating

employment.

- The process of Legislative reforms on Labour includes consultation with stakeholders including Central Trade Unions, Employers' Associations and State Governments in the form of tripartite consultation.

## Skill Development under PMEGP

### Context

- The Government has taken several initiatives to augment skill development under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP).
- Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) is being provided to the PMEGP beneficiaries through Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institutes as well as other national level Entrepreneurship Development Institutes (EDIs).

### Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP)

- The objective of EDP is to provide orientation and awareness pertaining to various managerial and operational functions like Finance, production, marketing, enterprise management, banking formalities, book-keeping etc.
- It also includes interaction with successful rural entrepreneur, banks as well as orientation through field visits. 10 days EDP training is mandatory for all type of projects.

## Implementation of Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram

### Context

- Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram is an initiative targeting livelihood generation for tribal population by harnessing the wealth of forest i.e. Van Dhan.

### About the program

- The programme aims to tap into the traditional knowledge and skill sets of tribal people by adding technology and Information Technology for upgradation of output at each stage and to convert the tribal wisdom into a remunerative economic activity.
- Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram seeks to promote and leverage the collective strength of tribal people to achieve a viable scale.
- Implementation of Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram is through Van Dhan Kendras. Selection of a place for setting up of a Van Dhan Kendra is dependent upon the area's potential and availability of land to be provided by the State Government.

