Beijing India Report as milestone and opportunity

Mains Syllabus: GS I - Role of women and women's organization, their problems and their remedies; Social empowerment.

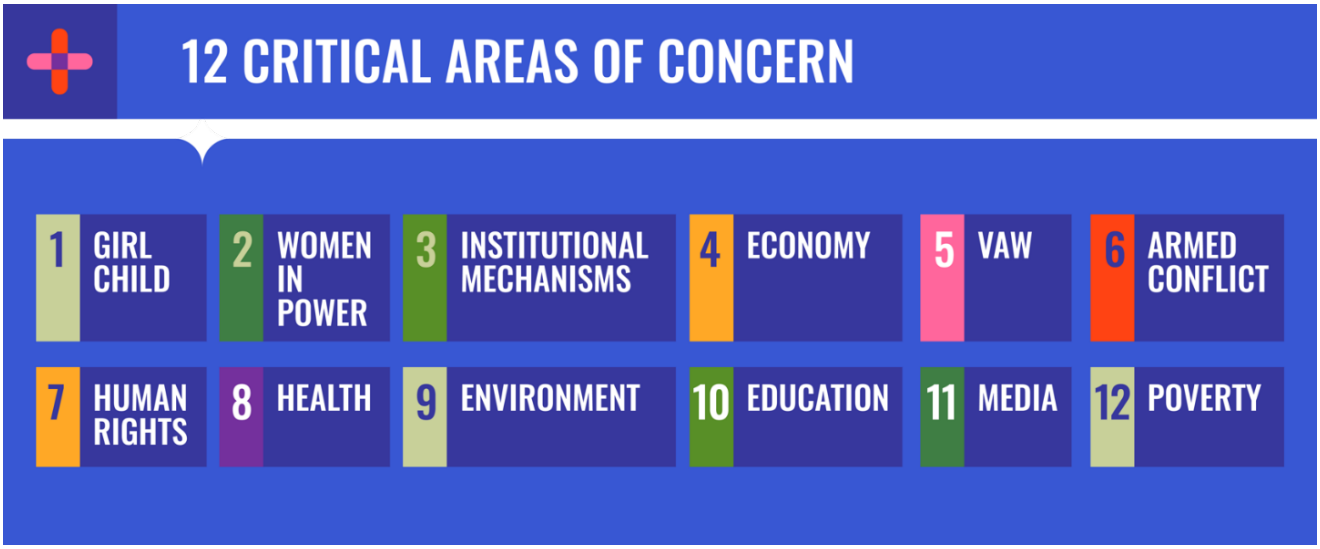
Why in News?

It has been 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

What is Beijing Declaration?

- **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA)** – It is a landmark international agenda outlining an action plan for gender equality.
- **Adoption** – It was adopted in 1995 at the 4th World conference on women(also 50th year of UN foundation).
- **12 Critical areas** – The declaration focuses on 12 critical areas of concern to advance gender equality globally.

12 Critical Areas of Beijing Declaration	
1. Women and **poverty**.	7. Women in **power** and decision-making.
2. **Education** and training of women.	8. **Institutional mechanisms** for the advancement of women.
3. Women and **health**.	9. Human **rights** of women.
4. **Violence** against women (VAW)	10. Women and the **media**.
5. Women and **armed conflict**.	11. Women and the **environment**.
6. Women and the **economy**.	12. The **girl child**.



- **Reference framework** - It is also one of the reference frameworks to analyse the situation of women around the world and to assess the efforts of States in support of women's empowerment.
- **Participation** - The Platform also sets an agenda for governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector to safeguard women's human rights.
- **Review** - Progress on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) is reviewed by the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) every five years.
- **Beijing+30 Report** - This report reviews the progress made over three decades, highlights ongoing challenges, and outlines priorities for further action.
- **Beijing India report** - It is India's Report on the Implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
- **Declaration's influence on India's action** -It has helped India focus attention on gender perspectives in policies, pass the
    - Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act
    - Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) or POSH Act
    - and push for the economic empowerment of women.

What is the link between Gender and Climate?

- Gender inequality and the climate crisis are one of the greatest challenges of today.
- **Inequality** - Existing inequalities, especially in India's rural areas, leave women and girls with less access to resources and decision-making power.
- **Climate change and women issues** - Malnutrition caused by droughts, food insecurity, and displacement leading to a higher rate of hysterectomies, infertility and menstrual health concerns is an area of concern.
- **Hampers women services** - Heat stress and/or extreme precipitation affect/s agriculture productivity, human productivity and ecosystem functionality, causing price fluctuations, loss in income, distress migration, damaged infrastructure and hampered services for women.
- 33% losses in income, especially from non-farm livelihood streams.
- **Increased burden of domestic work** - At the household or family level, the increased burden of unpaid care work (water collection, fuel gathering) due to climate-related

resource scarcity affects women.

The daily workload of women in India exceeds eight hours, with a staggering 71% unpaid work hours.

- Without efforts to combat climate change, the time women spend on unpaid tasks could reach 8.3 hours a day by 2050.
- **Health issues** – Climate change affects the access of healthy food to women further aggravating existing health issues such as anaemia.

In India, over 50% of pregnant women are anaemic, which is an underlying cause or contributing factor to maternal deaths in India.

- **Domestic violence** - In India, which has the highest rate of intimate partner violence among the countries in the study, there was a clear correlation between temperature rise and abuse.
- For each rise in degree Celsius, physical violence rose by 8% and sexual violence by 7.3%.

What is the role of women in climate adaptation?

- Women play a vital role in climate adaptation and mitigation.
- **Safeguarding ecosystem** – Women's traditional knowledge of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management is crucial in safeguarding the ecosystem in rural areas.
- **Conservation of indigenous crops** - Rural indigenous women are primarily responsible for preserving traditional climate-resilient seeds suitable for local climatic conditions.
- **Protecting food systems** - Women are responsible for half of the world's food production and have organically adapted to climate change by using sustainable agriculture.
- **Disaster management** – Women are one of the important first responders in disasters and safeguarding the local ecosystems.

What lies ahead?

- **Integrating gender and climate** – The integration is not just an imperative for achieving gender equality but is also essential for India's sustainable and resilient future and human rights.
- **Gender-responsive climate action** - Developing indicators and data related to the gendered impacts of climate change and also building insights.
- **Gender budgets** - It is necessary to design and use gender-audited and gender-responsive climate budgets.
- **Empower decision making** - Women in rural areas can be provided platforms to empower them in climate decision-making.

- **Energy leadership** - Promoting women's leadership in both green energy initiatives and local political leadership on climate action are crucial.
- **Capacity building** - By investing in women's education and capacity in climate action and promoting women-led climate initiatives, the consequences of gender invisibility can be turned around.
- **Closing the gender gap in agricultural resources** – It could significantly increase food production, with potential gains of 20%-30% in farm yields and the capacity to feed 100 million to 150 million more people.
- **Livelihood diversification** - Promoting non-farm livelihoods and skilling opportunities for women to adapt to the impacts of climate change on agriculture.
- **Financing** - Green funds can focus on fostering women-led and women-supportive innovations and ensuring women's participation in a green economic transition.

Reference

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