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Young Child Outcomes Index (YCOI)

- YCOI is a part of the "State of the Young Child in India" report, brought out by a civil society organization Mobile Creches.
- The report is supported by Bernard Van Leer Foundation.
- The report has also released Young Child Environment Index (YCEI) for 2015-16.
- **YCOI -** It takes following indicators into account

1. Health,
2. Nutrition
3. Cognitive growth
4. Infant mortality rate,
5. Stunting,
6. Net attendance at the primary school level.

- **YCEI –** It is based on indices using data related to various indicators on gender, poverty, health, safe water supply and education.
- This Index make clear that states with better circumstances tend to have better young child outcomes.
- It uses five policy enablers that influence child well-being outcomes, including poverty alleviation, strengthening primary healthcare, improving education levels, safe water supply and promotion of gender equity.
- Highlights of the report are as follows

1. Kerala, Goa, Tripura, Tamil Nadu and Mizoram are among the top five States for well-being of children.
2. Eight States that have scores below the country's average: they are Assam, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
3. The index has been constructed for two time periods (2005–2006 and 2015–2016) to enable inter-State comparisons as well as provide an idea of change over time.
4. According to the environment index, Kerala, Goa, Sikkim, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh secured the top five positions.

5. The environment index was constructed for 2015–2016 only due to limitations of data availability.
6. The eight States that have a below average score on the outcomes index also fared poorly on this one.
7. India spent ₹1,723 per child in 2018–2019, an amount that is insufficient and fails to reach the entire eligible population.
8. While the population of children under six years of age is 158.8 million, the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) covers only 71.9 million children as calculated from the total number of beneficiaries across States.

Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)

- ICDS is an Indian government welfare programme which provides food, preschool education, and primary healthcare to children under 6 years of age and their mothers.
- The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- Integrated Child Development Services is Centrally sponsored and will provide the following six services to the beneficiaries:

1. Supplementary Nutrition (SNP)
2. Health & Nutrition Check-Up
3. Immunization
4. Non-Formal Education for Children in Pre-School
5. Health and Nutrition Education
6. Referral services

- Above mentioned services are provided from Anganwadi centres established mainly in rural areas and staffed with frontline workers.

Global Innovation Index (GII)

- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has released GII 2020.
- GII ranks global economies according to their innovation capabilities, including roughly 80 indicators, grouped into innovation inputs and outputs.
- Switzerland is the world's most-innovative economy followed by Sweden, the United States of America (U.S.), the United Kingdom (U.K.) and the Netherlands.
- India has been ranked 48th on the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2020 among 131 economies, breaking into the top 50 countries for the first

time.

- According to recent reports India has made the most significant progress in the GII together with three other economies China, Vietnam and Philippines.
- In India three 'clusters' Bengaluru, Delhi and Mumbai feature in the top 100 science & technology hotspots, further endorsing India's presence in the global innovation economy.
- The WIPO had also accepted India as one of the leading innovation achievers of 2019 in the central and southern Asian region, as it has shown a consistent improvement in its innovation ranking for the last 5 years.

Revised Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Guidelines

- Recently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released revised Priority Sector Lending (PSL) guidelines.
- It align with emerging national priorities and also bring sharper focus on inclusive development.
- The PSL guidelines were last reviewed for commercial banks in April 2015 and for Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs) in May 2018.
- Additional Categories covered under to PSL are

a. Bank finance to start-ups up to Rs. 50 crore,
b. Loans to farmers for installation of solar power plants for solarisation of grid connected agriculture pumps.
c. Loans for setting up Compressed BioGas plants.

- Revised Guidelines includes the following

1. Higher credit limit has been specified for Farmers Producers Organizations (FPOs) undertaking farming with assured marketing of their produce at a predetermined price.
2. It has defined farmers with land holding of up to one hectare as marginal farmers, and farmers with a landholding of more than one hectare and up to 2 hectares as small farmers.
3. The credit limits for renewable energy, health infrastructure, including the projects under 'Ayushman Bharat', have been doubled.
4. Higher weightage has been assigned to priority sector credit in 'identified districts' where priority sector credit flow is comparatively low.

Priority Sector Lending

- The RBI mandates banks to lend a certain portion of their funds to

specified sectors, like

1. Agriculture,
2. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs),
3. Export credit,
4. Education,
5. Housing,
6. Social infrastructure,
7. Renewable energy.

- All scheduled commercial banks and foreign banks (with a sizable presence in India) are mandated to set aside 40% of their Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANDC) for lending to these sectors.
- Regional rural banks, co-operative banks and small finance banks have to allocate 75% of ANDC to PSL.

CoViDx One

- 'CoViDx One', is a RT-PCR test kit, developed by Pune-based GenePath Diagnostics.
- It has received approval for manufacture and sale in India from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).
- The CDSCO has given approval to the Bengaluru-based Achira Labs to manufacture the kits.
- This makes Gene Path the first company in India to run a National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)-ICMR approved COVID-19 testing lab as well as to have received approval to manufacture its own RT-PCR test kit.

BRICS Culture Ministers Meeting

- 5th BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting was held through a video conference under the Chairpersonship of Russian Federation.
- The delegates from Culture Ministries of the BRICS nations - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - participated in the meeting.
- Suggestions Given by India in the meeting are as follows
- **Digitisation -** Exploring possibilities of hosting a Digital Online Exhibition on a shared theme towards the end of 2021 under the auspices of BRICS Alliance of Museums.
- **BRICS Corner -** Opening the BRICS Corner under the auspices of BRICS Alliance of Libraries proposed to be inaugurated during India's BRICS Presidency in 2021.

- The Corner will disseminate information related to the history and culture of BRICS countries.

Expansion of Kaziranga National Park

- Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) has an estimated 2,413 rhinos and 121 tigers.
- It is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985.
- Recently Assam government has approved the addition of 30.53 sq km to the 884 sq km Kaziranga National Park.
- The additional areas straddling two districts Nagaon and Sonitpur would make the larger Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) grow to 1085.53 sq km.

Source: PIB, the Hindu

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