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YUVA SANGAM

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs", and the topic details "Yuva Sangam". This topic has relevance in the "Polity and Governance" section of the UPSC CSE exam.

For Prelims:

What is Yuva Sangam?

What is Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat?

For Mains:

GS2: Polity and Governance

Important Government Schemes and Policies

Why in the news?

The registration portal for Phase III of Yuva Sangam, an Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) component, has been recently launched.

About Yuva Sangam:

- Yuva Sangam is an initiative by the Government of India to **strengthen connections among young individuals from different States/Union Territories** of India.
- **Eligibility:** Youth in the age group of 18-30 years, including students, NSS (National Service Scheme)/NYKS (Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan) volunteers, employed/self-employed individuals, etc.
- This initiative, launched under EBSB, draws inspiration from the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- Its core focus is experiential learning and firsthand exposure to India's rich diversity.
- Yuva Sangam is an ongoing cultural exchange that celebrates diversity by offering participants immersive experiences covering various aspects of life, natural landscapes, developmental milestones, recent achievements, and youth connections in the host state.
- Phase III of Yuva Sangam involves twenty distinguished institutions across India, with participants from these Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) visiting 22 states and Union Territories.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat

- Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat is an initiative launched by the Indian Government to foster mutual understanding and connections among the diverse states and union territories in India.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced this program on October 31, 2015, during the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- The **Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education**, implements the scheme.
- **The primary objectives of this program are as follows:**
 - To **celebrate India's unity in diversity** and preserve and strengthen the traditional emotional bonds that connect the people of our nation.
 - To **facilitate interactions and encourage mutual understanding between the residents of different states** and union territories through a concept known as state/UT pairing.
- Each state or union territory is paired with another every year, promoting reciprocal interactions among the people. This exchange is expected to enhance understanding and foster stronger bonds, ultimately reinforcing the unity and integrity of India.

Sources:

pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1968709

Q1. With reference to Yuva Sangam, consider the following statements:

1. It is a component of the Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar program.
2. It aims to strengthen connections among young individuals from different States/Union Territories.
3. The program draws inspiration from the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

Q2. Consider the following statements with reference to Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat Scheme:

1. The Scheme aims to foster mutual understanding among the diverse states in India.
2. The Ministry of Culture implements the scheme.
3. Every year, each state/ union territory is paired with another state/ UT for promoting people-people interactions.

How many of the abovementioned statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

Q3. Discuss the concept of regionalism in India and examine the government's initiatives to address and manage regional disparities.

Gaurav Nikumbh

MANUAL SCAVENGING

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Manual Scavenging". This topic has relevance in the Social Issues section of the UPSC CSE exam.

GS 2: Social Issues

Why in the news?

The Supreme Court has issued a series of directives to both the central and state governments, with the aim of entirely eliminating manual scavenging. Furthermore, the court has called for an increase in compensation in situations of fatality or injury.

Background:

- The court acknowledged the petition filed in 2020, bringing to its attention the pressing issue of fatalities in sewers, despite the practice being legally banned.
- The practice of manual scavenging was prohibited through the enactment of the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993, and the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.
- The court initiated proceedings against various government entities, including the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the National Commission for Scheduled Castes, and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.

Safai Karamchari Andolan and others vs. Union of India:

- In a landmark case, the Supreme Court reinforced the ban on manual scavenging and issued directives for the rehabilitation of individuals, both traditionally and otherwise, engaged in this hazardous practice. The judgment emphasized that rehabilitation should be founded on principles of justice and transformation.
- The judgment underscored the necessity for rehabilitation that aligns with principles of justice and transformation. Moreover, it emphasized that individuals liberated from manual scavenging should not face unnecessary obstacles in obtaining what is rightfully theirs under the law.

Definition of Manual Scavenging:

- Manual scavenging involves the manual removal of human and animal waste from dry toilets, followed by its transportation and disposal. According to the "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013)," it encompasses tasks like manually cleaning, carrying, disposing of, or handling human excreta in insanitary latrines. This practice was officially banned by the anti-manual scavenging Act in 1993 and further reinforced in 2013, making it illegal since December 2013.

Manual Scavenging in India

Yojna IAS



Government Initiatives:

- **Prohibition of Manual Scavenging:**

- The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, not only prohibits the construction or maintenance of unhygienic toilets but also forbids the employment of individuals in cleaning sewer pipes and swimming pools through hazardous manual methods.
- The Act also outlines measures to rehabilitate individuals identified by municipalities as service providers in this context.

- **Constitutional Rights:**

- Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees the 'Right to Life' and 'Right to Dignity,' reinforcing the government's obligation to eradicate the dehumanizing practice of manual scavenging.

- **Swachhta Abhiyan App:**

- The government has developed the Swachhta Abhiyan App to identify and geotag data related to insanitary latrines and manual scavengers. The primary objective is to replace insanitary latrines with sanitary ones and ensure the rehabilitation of manual scavengers, thereby affording them a life of dignity.

The Way Forward

- **Accurate Assessment:** Nation should conduct comprehensive assessments to accurately determine the number of workers involved in hazardous tasks like cleaning toxic waste.
- **Empowering Local Authorities:** Prioritizing the elimination of manual scavenging under initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission and utilizing the available funds for smart cities and urban development can effectively address the issue of manual scavenging.

- **Social Sensitization:** Addressing the deeply entrenched issue of social stigma and discrimination against manual scavengers is crucial. This requires a concerted effort to raise awareness and understanding about the reasons behind the continued inclusion of manual scavenging in the societal hierarchy.
- **Stringent Legislation:** Enacting and enforcing stringent laws that impose a legal obligation on state organs to provide proper sanitation services can help safeguard the rights of these workers. Such legislation would ensure that their rights are not violated and that they are not subjected to hazardous practices.

Source:

<https://www.msn.com/en-in/news/other/put-a-total-stop-to-manual-scavenging-supreme-court/ar-AA1iAmxl>

Q.1 Consider the following statements about Manual scavenging:

1. Manual scavenging was officially prohibited by the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 1993.
2. Swachhta Abhiyan App identifies and geotags data related to insanitary latrines and manual scavengers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: C

Q.2 Discuss the socio-economic and human rights challenges associated with manual scavenging in India, and evaluate the effectiveness of government initiatives and legislation in eradicating this degrading practice.

Rishabh

