TNPSC GROUP I MAIN 2023

MANDATORY TEST VI – ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. **ASER REPORT – 2022**

   Context

   ASER, a nationwide citizen-led household survey that provides a snapshot of children's schooling and learning in rural India has been released.

   About ASER

   ❖ The first ASER was conducted in 2005 and repeated annually for ten years.

   ❖ **Coverage**: ASER is a rural survey, and urban areas are not covered in it. ASER 2022 reached almost 700,000 children in over 19,000 villages across 616 districts in India, and generated district, state, and national level estimates of children's enrolment status and foundational skills.

   ❖ **Methodology:** Unlike most other large-scale learning assessments, ASER is a household-based rather than school-based survey. This design enables all children to be included – those who have never been to school or have dropped out, as well as those who are in government schools, private schools, religious schools, or anywhere else.

- Information on schooling status is collected for all children in the age group 3-16 living in sampled households.
- Children in the age group 5-16 are tested in basic reading and basic arithmetic.

❖ Who conducts the survey? ASER tools and procedures are designed by ASER Centre, the research and assessment arm of Pratham, which is one of the largest non-governmental organizations in the country created to improve the quality of education in India.

❖ **Significance:** ASER has had a major influence in bringing the issue of learning to the centre of the stage in discussions and debates on education in India.

❖ ASER data has been used in many reports such as NITI Aayog's 3-Year Action Agenda for 2017-18 to 2019-20, Economic Survey of India 2021-22, and World Bank's World Development Report 2018.

Findings - Enrolment and attendance

❖ Overall enrolment: The enrolment rate for the 6 to 14 age group has been above 95% for the past 15 years. Despite school closures during the pandemic, overall enrolment figures have increased from 97.2% in 2018 to 98.4% in 2022.

❖ Government school enrolment: The proportion of children (aged 6 to 14) enrolled in government schools increased sharply from 65.6% in 2018 to 72.9% in 2022.

❖ The proportion of girls who are not currently enrolled: In 2022, the all-India figure for 11-14-year-old girls not enrolled in school stands at 2%. This figure is around 4% only in Uttar Pradesh and is lower in all other states.
- The proportion of 15-16-year-old girls not enrolled has continued to drop, standing at 7.9% in 2022. Only 3 states have more than 10% of girls in this age group out of school: Madhya Pradesh (17%), Uttar Pradesh (15%), and Chhattisgarh (11.2%).

❖ Enrolment in the pre-primary age group: Across rural India, the proportion of 3-year-olds enrolled in some form of early childhood education stands at 78.3% in 2022, an increase of 7.1 percentage points over 2018 levels.

Findings - Paid private tuition classes

❖ Nationally, the proportion of children in Standard I-VIII taking paid private tuition classes increased from 26.4% in 2018 to 30.5% in 2022.

Findings- Learning levels: Foundational skills in reading and arithmetic

❖ Nationally, children's basic reading ability has dropped to pre-2012 levels, reversing the slow improvement achieved in the intervening years. Drops are visible in both government and private schools in most states, and for both boys and girls.

❖ Nationally, children's basic arithmetic levels have declined over 2018 levels for most grades. But the declines are less steep and the picture is more varied than in the case of basic reading.

❖ Nationally, children's ability to read simple English sentences has stayed more or less at the 2016 level for children in Standard V (from 24.7% in 2016 to 24.5% in 2022). Slight improvements are visible for children in Standard VIII (from 45.3% in 2016 to 46.7% in 2022).

Findings - School observations

Small schools and multigrade classrooms

❖ The proportion of government schools with less than 60 students enrolled has increased every year over the last decade.

❖ The states with the highest proportion of small schools in 2022 include Himachal Pradesh (81.4%) and Uttarakhand (74%).

- ❖ However, some states show a decrease in the fraction of small schools, such as Uttar Pradesh (from 62.2% in 2018 to 57.7% in 2022) and Kerala (from 17% in 2018 to 13.4% in 2022).

Teacher and student attendance

- ❖ At the All-India level, no major change is seen in students' and teachers' attendance. Average teacher attendance increased slightly, from 85.4% in 2018 to 87.1% in 2022. Average student attendance continues to hover at around 72% for the past several years.

School facilities

- ❖ The fraction of schools with useable girls' toilets increased from 66.4% in 2018 to 68.4% in 2022.
- ❖ The proportion of schools with drinking water available increased from 74.8% to 76%, and the proportion of schools with books other than textbooks being used by students increased from 36.9% to 44% over the same period.
- ❖ Most sports-related indicators also remain close to the levels observed in 2018. In 2022, 68.9% of schools have a playground, up slightly from 66.5% in 2018.

Initiatives by the Government of India for Promoting Elementary Education
❖ Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan under the Samagra Shiksha
❖ Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme
❖ Mahila Samakhya Programme
❖ Strengthening for providing quality Education in Madrassas (SPQEM)

2. Urban Health/Wellness Centre

Introduction:

Nearly 500 urban health and wellness centres to be thrown open to the public in a month.

Fillip for healthcare

A total of 593 Urban Health and Wellness Centres were sanctioned for 2021–2022 and 115 for 2022–2023 across Tamil Nadu

Health Unit Districts (HUD)/Corporations getting most number of centres

District	HUD/Corporation	Total number of Urban Health and Wellness Centres
Chennai	Greater Chennai Corporation	200
Coimbatore	Coimbatore Corporation	64
	Coimbatore	8
Madurai	Madurai Corporation	62
	Municipality	2
Tiruppur	Tiruppur Corporation	34
	Municipality	5
Tiruchi	Tiruchi Corporation	36
	Tiruchi	2
Salem	Salem Corporation	32
	Municipality	3

Features of the centres

- Will function from 8 a.m. to noon, and from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- A doctor, staff nurse, health inspector, support staff will be available
- Will offer 12 services, including antenatal care and treatment for minor ailments such as fever, cold, cough

About:

Work on 708 Urban Health and Wellness Centres is progressing fast in Tamil Nadu. In the first phase, nearly 500 of these centres are to be opened for members of the public in a month.

"Urban Health and Wellness Centres are the need of the hour in view of the increasing urban population. They will definitely ensure immediate treatment for people, especially those who are living in urban slums, and will also reduce their out-of-pocket expenditure.

Phase I:

In phase I, around 500 centres will be opened in a month. Each centre will have a doctor, a staff nurse, a health inspector and a support staff member. The recruitment for these posts will be carried out through the District Health Societies.

The Urban Health and Wellness Centres will function from 8 a.m. to noon and from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

"They will basically function as clinics in the morning and evening hours, and offer 12 services, including antenatal care, infant immunisation and treatment for minor ailments such as fever, cold and cough. The centres will be linked with the school health teams for followup and will dispense medications for noncommunicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. They will also have a health education component.

3. Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour

Introduction:

Eboutique launched in Tiruvallur to promote work of rehabilitated bonded labourers.

Hands that once toiled in brick kilns and rice mills now do what they love the most. A group of rehabilitated bonded labourers in Adigathur, Tiruvallur, who are skilled artisans in Aari and embroidery, have formed self-help groups (SHG) to develop the spirit of entrepreneurship.

Zaari:

'Zaari', an eboutique has been launched by the Tiruvallur district administration under the umbrella of 'Siragugal', an initiative to

transform the lives of rescued labourers. 'Zaari' is a step forward to help the community to brand their products and get a better market price for them.

"I developed an interest towards Aari and embroidery work during my school days. I was happy to do the job I loved. But, I only had a low margin. I work on a piece for a whole day and earn 50 or 100. The Collectorate chose 15 of us interested in embroidery and trained us to improve our skills," said Durga Hari, one of the SHG members. Durga Hari, who was a child labourer, was rescued from a rice mill in Tiruvallur in 2006.

The members from special SHGs like Allipookal and Samanthipoo were identified for the Zaari project and trained to bring their skills in line with the current trends.

The Tiruvallur district administration has created an Instagram page – zaari_ artisanal – to promote the SHG's embroidery work and to directly sell their products. Tiruvallur Collector Alby John Varghese said, "We want to upscale their skills and help them run their own business. More units will be set up based on the patronage."

Conclusion:
The district administration has formed SHGs to create a sustainable livelihood for rescued workers. There are also plans to create a website, train SHGs to handle ecommerce platforms and provide a dedicated workspace and infrastructure, such as sewing machines and embroidery frames, he said.

4. Manual Scavenging – TN

Introduction:

Any person engaged to clean a sewer or a septic tank would have to be provided a list of 44 items of protective gear and safety devices by his employer, according to the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Rules, 2022 notified by the State government recently.

"Employment of any person for manual scavenging or hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks is completely banned under the Act. Manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks with safety precautions including protective gear and devices can be undertaken under exceptional cases only, with the permission of the local authority for reasons to be recorded.

The ugly truths of manual scavenging

The notification issued by the Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 specified that no person must be allowed to clean a sewer manually without protective gear and safety devices under these rules except in certain cases.

The local authority or officer designated is to ensure that a list of 14 cleaning devices are used by persons engaged in cleaning sewer or septic tanks. The cleaning of a sewer or a septic tank shall be done "only in day-light" and for a duration not exceeding 90 minutes at a stretch, it said.

A mandatory interval of 30 minutes between two stretches is to be allowed and after the cleaning process. "Ensure that written operating and rescue procedures are displayed at the entry site," it said. The rules specify a survey of "insanitary latrines" by every local authority, which is to draw a suitable time schedule for the survey within its jurisdiction.

Re-constitution of panels against manual scavenging notified

If the local authority undertakes a survey to identify persons engaged in manual scavenging, the "identified manual scavengers, one from each family, shall be eligible for receiving one time cash assistance of 40,000 immediately after identification."

Each local body and private sanitation agencies are to be equipped with appropriate technology, machineries, among others and are to ensure that only trained professionals are allowed to enter the sewer / septic tanks.

The rules are provided for constitution of State Level Survey Committee, District Level Survey Committees, State Monitoring Committee and District Vigilance Committees.

They know it is an inhuman and demeaning job rooted in caste-based discrimination and passed on to successive generations, but the sanitary workers continue to undertake manual scavenging as employers exploit them, and at times are cruel as well. The workers, the women especially, continue to do so to sustain the family and to educate their children so that the scourge ends with them.

These are some of the facts known from the interviews taken among the sanitary workers in the State for a study report by Social Awareness Society for Youth (SASY) on 'The status of implementation of prohibition of employment as manual scavengers and rehabilitation (PEMSR) Act - 2013 in T.N'.

Manual Scavening Deaths:

SASY, a Dalit Human Rights Organisation, studied 21 cases related to manual scavenging, sewer tank deaths, incidents of caste-based discrimination against sanitary workers and related incidents in government schools in Tamil Nadu in the year 2021-22.

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From the 21 fact finding cases, the report found that the victims were mostly from Scheduled Castes. Among the 21 cases, 12 were from SC Arundhathiyar, 11 from SC Adi Dravidar community, four from SC

Hindu Kuravar, one from ST and one of two cases from many backward and most backward castes.

According to data from the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis, in the past 29 years (1993-2022), a total of 989 members died in various parts of the country while cleaning underground sewage tanks. Tamil Nadu reported the highest number of deaths of manual scavengers. During the period from 2016 to 2020, in Tamil Nadu 55 persons died while cleaning septic tanks. Chennai holds the highest with 12 deaths. In 2022, from January to July, 12 members died.

Data | Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu recorded most sewer-cleaning related deaths in last six years

The workers were made to work in the most hazardous way. There was not enough protective gear and tech support and they continue to do it manually. Based on the study, recommendations have been made for procurement of machines for cleaning of sewer and septic tanks in major cities such as Chennai.

Conclusion:

Recommendations have been made for effective monitoring by local government to prevent such deaths. The study also stressed the need for bio toilets to prevent such deaths of manual scavengers, increase in fund allocation for their rehabilitation.

5. Mahalir Urimai Thittam

Introduction:

Tamil Nadu Government is taking major steps towards the Development of Tamil Nadu state and Implementing various State Government welfare schemes for the Livelihood of Women, Children, and Farmers. This Year Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Launched various Government Schemes in the budget for the financial year of 2023-24. One of which is the Tamil Nadu Magalir Urimai Thogai Scheme, under which financial Assistance will be provided to the Women citizens of Tamil Nadu.

Magalir Urimai Thogai Scheme:

Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Shri MK Stalin announced in the budget of 2023-24 that his government will launch a financial Assistance Scheme for the Women of The State. Tamil Nadu Government has Launched the Magalir Urimai Thogai Scheme to Provide Financial Assistance of Rs. 1000 per month to the Women Head of a Family, Nearly 1 Crore women of Tamil Nadu will be covered under this State Government's Scheme of Universal Basic Income.

Tamil Nadu Government has allocated Rs. 7000 Crore for The Magalir Urimai Thogai Scheme, under which Assistance of Rs. 1000 per month will be provided. Online and Offline Registration for the Scheme will start on 15th September 2023 on the occasion of the birth anniversary of late Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai.

Magalir Urimai Thoga Eligibility Criteria:

❖ Beneficiaries Must be Permanent Residents of Tamil Nadu.

❖ The amount will be transferred to the Women Heads of Household only.

❖ Various Categories, including The Elderly, Disabled, widows, and unmarried women will be covered.

❖ Women who are currently serving in State and Central Government will not be covered under this Scheme.

Objectives of the Tamil Nadu Magalir Urimai Thogai Scheme:

❖ To provide Financial Assistance to All eligible women heads of Families of Tamil Nadu.
❖ To Empower Women to Become Self-Dependent by Starting Small businesses.
❖ To support Around 1 Crore women of The State.
❖ To Provide Social Security to the All Women of Tamil Nadu.
❖ To Provide Financial Assistance of Rs. 1000 per month to Around 1 Crore Women of Tamil Nadu.

6. Rajasthan Health Act

Rajasthan has become the first state to pass in Assembly the Right to Health Bill.

Key Features of the Bill

❖ The Bill provides the right to health and access to healthcare for people in the state. This includes free health care services at any clinical establishment to residents of the state.
❖ The Bill sets certain obligations on the state government to ensure the right to health and maintain public health.
❖ Health Authorities will be set up at the state and district level. These bodies will formulate, implement, monitor, and develop mechanisms for quality healthcare and management of public health emergencies.

Need for the Bill in Rajasthan

❖ Share in Population: Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Rajasthan--account for about 47% of India's population; they are more rural and socioeconomically backward compared to the rest of the country.

They are also high focus states under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), in view of their relatively higher fertility and mortality indicators.

❖ **Post COVID:** The COVID pandemic has exposed the incompetence of the health care system and refutation of basic health amenities.

- Simple functions of health care such as testing, contact tracing or even changing the behaviour of citizens required the intervention and undivided attention of the district administration.
- During the pandemic, even non-COVID patients were denied treatment and still they were unable to give adequate treatment to all the COVID affected patients.

- ❖ **Demand for Right to Health:** It's also been nearly a decade since various civil organisations have been demanding and persuading different governments to propose laws that make health a public right.

- ❖ **Political Will:** It was only in the election manifestos of a couple of political parties that this issue was highlighted and political commitment was visible. However, that went to the gallows as they never came near to being in power or having any say as such in government decision making.

7. Rajasthan Gig Economy/Workers/Welfare Fund/Welfare Board

The Rajasthan Government is about to bring the Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023, which has stringent provisions against errant aggregators, including barring them from operating in the State.

Highlights of the Bill

- ❖ Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers Welfare Board: It will design welfare policies and hear grievances of the workers hired on a piece rate basis. The Bill gives powers to the board to decide the quantum of cess that every aggregator will have to pay towards this social welfare corpus. This cess shall be a percentage of every transaction that takes place on the platform.

- ❖ **Unique ID**: All platform-based gig workers registered with any platform shall be automatically registered with the board irrespective of the duration of their engagement with the platform. The board shall generate a unique ID for every platform-based gig worker registered with one or more aggregators in the State. This unique ID will be valid for three years.

- ❖ **Penalty:** Data of the gig workers employed with the board and sharing data of every transaction that takes place on their platform, can be fined up to 10 lakh for the first contravention and up to 1 crore for subsequent ones.

- The Bill also empowers the board to recommend suspension of operations of the errant aggregator temporarily or permanently in the State.

❖ The draft Bill that is with the Law department currently, will be put in public domain soon inviting feedback.

Who are gig workers?

❖ Non-standard or gig work consists of income-earning activities outside of standard, long-term employer-employee relationships.
❖ A gig economy is a labor market that relies heavily on temporary and part-time positions filled by independent contractors and freelancers rather than full-time permanent employees.
❖ The term is borrowed from the music world, where performers book "gigs" that are single or short-term engagements at various venues.
❖ The gig economy uses digital platforms to connect freelancers with customers to provide short-term services or asset-sharing.
❖ Examples include ride-hailing apps, food delivery apps, and holiday rental apps.

Reasons for a rise in Gig Workers

❖ **Post Pandemic:** The trend accelerated during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the gig economy experienced significant increases as gig workers delivered necessities to home-bound consumers, and those whose jobs had been eliminated turned to part-time and contract work for income.

❖ **Freedom to work from anywhere:** These types of positions facilitate independent contracting work, with many of them not requiring a freelancer to come into an office.

❖ **Wide Range of Applicants:** Employers also have a wider range of applicants to choose from because they don't have to hire someone based on their proximity.

❖ **Rise of Technology and Internet:** Rise of fast internet and smartphones have made it easier to work from anywhere easily.

❖ **Convenient for Small Organisations:** Employers who cannot afford to hire full-time employees to do all the work will often hire part-time or temporary employees to take care of busier times or specific projects.

❖ **More income with more work:** People often find they need to move or take multiple positions to afford the lifestyle they want. It's also common to change careers many times throughout a lifetime, so the gig economy can be viewed as a reflection of this occurring on a large scale.

❖ **Benefits Employers:** Employers do not need to provide related benefits, such as medical insurance, Provident Fund, and year-end bonuses which make it a better option for them to pay only for work on a unit basis.

❖ **Work for All:** Students can choose lower-skilled jobs and work without academic or professional qualifications. Retirees, housewives, etc. may find it difficult to find part-time jobs on weekdays, but now they can make good use of their spare time to earn extra money.

Challenges

❖ **Hurdle in growth of full time employee**: While not all employers are inclined to hire contracted employees, the gig economy trend can make it harder for full-time employees to develop in their careers since temporary employees are often cheaper to hire and more flexible in their availability.

❖ **Work-life balance:** For some workers, the flexibility of working gigs can actually disrupt the work-life balance, sleep patterns, and activities of daily life

❖ **Can replace Full time employees**: The number of full-time employees required by the company can be reduced as freelance workers take over the work.

- ❖ **No job security:** In effect, workers in a gig economy are more like entrepreneurs than traditional workers. While this may mean greater freedom of choice for the individual worker, it also means that the security of a steady job with regular pay and benefits.

- ❖ **No regular job benefits:** Many employers save money by avoiding paying benefits such as health coverage and paid vacation time. because there is no formal employment relationship with the platform company, there are usually no employee benefits in short-term contracts, which are less guaranteed than full-time and part-time jobs, and are difficult to write on resumes.

India and Gig Economy

- ❖ In 2020, 7.7 million workers were engaged in the gig economy.

- ❖ The gig workforce is expected to expand to 23.5 million workers by 2029-30.

- ❖ At present about 47% of the gig work is in medium skilled jobs, about 22% in high skilled, and about 31% in low skilled jobs.

- ❖ Trend shows the concentration of workers in medium skills is gradually declining and that of the low skilled and high skilled is increasing.

- ❖ It may be expected that while the domination of medium skills would continue till 2030, gig work with other skills will emerge.

Steps Taken by Government of India for Gig Workers

- ❖ Code of Social Security, 2020: The Government has formulated the Code on Social Security, 2020 which envisages framing of suitable social security schemes for gig workers and platform workers on matters relating to life and disability cover, accident insurance, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, etc. However, these provisions under the Code have not come into force.

- ❖ Platform workers are those whose work is based on online software apps or digital platforms. Non-platform gig workers are

generally casual wage workers and own-account workers in the conventional sectors, working part-time or full time.

❖ e-Shram Portal: The Government has also launched e-Shram portal in 2021 for registration and creation of a Comprehensive National Database of Unorganized Workers including gig workers and platform workers.

❖ It allows a person to register himself or herself on the portal on a self-declaration basis, which is spread across around 400 occupations.

8. Centre for Social Justice/Equity

Introduction:

The Tamil Nadu government will set up a Centre for Social Justice and Equity at Madras School of Social Work, with a grant of 2 crore, Minister for Adi Dravidar Welfare N. Kayalvizhi Selvaraj announced in the Assembly on Tuesday.

Features:

The Centre would offer research and certification programmes focusing on promoting social justice and equity, organise conferences and bring out research publications. The schemes offered through the Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation (TAHDCO) towards economic progress of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities would be revamped to suit the present day. A Project Monitoring Unit would be created to monitor the implementation of various schemes of the department. The projects taken up under the Schedule Castes Sub Plan (SCSP) and the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP), too, would be monitored by the unit.

While the food for students in the department-run hostels are prepared in the respective hostels, the Minister said a centralised kitchen would be set up for the 23 school and college hostels functioning in Chennai, at a cost of 3.75 crore.

The socioeconomic survey of all the 37 tribal communities would be done with the help of nongovernmental organisations for formulating new schemes for them.

Internet connectivity will be set up in remote tribal villages at a cost of 10 crore to improve communication.

9. Supreme Court Judgement on Divorce

Introduction:

The Supreme Court's five-judge Constitution panel ruled that it can terminate a marriage based on irreversible breakdown.

Supreme Court Judgement on Divorce

The Constitution Bench ruled that the SC can grant divorce couples on the ground that the marriage had broken down irretrievably, without referring the parties to a family court where they must wait 6-18 months for a decree of divorce by mutual consent. It said that it can exercise its plenary power to do "complete justice" under Article 142(1) of the Indian Constitution.

What is the current procedure for divorce under the Hindu Marriage Act?

❖ The Hindu Marriage Act provides for "divorce by mutual consent" in Section 13B.

  - Both parties to the marriage must file a joint petition with the district court "on the grounds that they have been living separately for a period of one year or more, that they have been unable to live together, and that they have mutually agreed that the marriage should be dissolved."

❖ The six-month waiting period is intended to allow the parties time to retract their plea.

❖ A waiver of the six-month waiting period under Section 13B(2) can be requested in a family court exemption application.

- ❖ Due to the enormous number of identical cases waiting before family courts, obtaining a divorce order is frequently time-consuming and lengthy.

What factors can courts consider while deciding if a marriage has irretrievably broken down?

- ❖ The Supreme Court declared that, in accordance with Article 142 of the Constitution, it will decide what guidelines should be followed for dissolving marriages.
- ❖ The court must be thoroughly convinced and satisfied that the marriage is completely unsustainable, emotionally dead, and beyond salvation, and that, as a result, dissolution of marriage is the only viable option.

What is Article 142 of the Constitution?

- ❖ Article 142 gives the Supreme Court the unique power to perform "complete justice" between the parties when the law or statute does not afford a remedy.
- ❖ In such cases, the Court may go above and beyond to resolve a disagreement in a manner appropriate to the facts of the case.

What is the criticism of Article 142 and how have courts countered it?

- ❖ The definition of "complete justice" is a subjective exercise that varies with the situation. As a result, the court must put checks in place.

- ❖ The court also stated that the separation period should be lengthy enough, and that "anything above six years or more will be a relevant factor."

- ❖ The broad extent of these authorities has led to accusations that they are arbitrary and imprecise.

❖ It is further maintained that because there is no conventional definition for the term "complete justice," the Court has broad authority, which allows for arbitrary exercise or misuse.

10. Juvenile Crime

Introduction:

In the wake of the death of a juvenile in a State-run home in Chengalpattu district, the Tamil Nadu government on Monday announced that a high-level committee would be constituted to review and improve the functioning of observation homes, special homes and places of safety under the Juvenile Justice Board.

A retired judge of the Madras High Court will head the panel, and a retired IAS officer and a representative from a non-governmental organisations (NGOs) will also be part of the committee on the directions of Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, an official release said.

Felled by the protectors

He has also announced a compensation of 7.5 lakh and a financial assistance of 2.5 lakh from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund (CMPRF) for the victim's family, it said. Six officials in the observation home have been arrested in connection with the incident.

Mr. Stalin also issued orders to allocate a unit in the Tamil Nadu Urban Habitat Development Board (TNUHBD) tenements at Annai Anjugam Nagar in Tambaram to the family of the victim. Its construction is nearing completion, it said.

In another event, the Chief Minister virtually unveiled the foundation stone for a place of safety to be constructed at Athur in Chengalpattu district at a cost of ₹15.95 crore and other buildings at a cost of ₹27 crore.

Meeting chaired

He also chaired another meeting to review the functions of the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Department. Minister N. Kayalvizhi

Selvaraj, Chief Secretary V. Irai Anbu and senior officials were also present.

During the meeting, Mr. Stalin instructed officials to ensure that various welfare schemes reached the intended beneficiaries without any delay. He urged them to consult with the Commissioner of Land Administration and the respective Collectors over distributing free land pattas to beneficiaries from the Adi Dravidar and tribal communities.

11. Ela Bhatt

Context:

Ela Bhatt, noted Gandhian, leading women's empowerment activist and renowned founder of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) has passed away.

About Ela Bhatt:

❖ She was known as the "Gentle Revolutionary" who changed the lives of lakhs of women through her organisation, providing them with microloans for five decades.

❖ She founded the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in 1972.

❖ She also headed the women's wing of Majoor Mahajan Sangh-the Textile Labour Association founded by Anasuya Sarabhai and Mahatma Gandhi.

❖ She was the chairperson of the Sabarmati Ashram Memorial and Preservation Trust, also co-founded the Women's World Banking, a global network of microfinance organisations, of which she was chairperson from 1984 to 1988.

❖ She was also nominated to Rajya Sabha, and was a member of the Planning Commission.

❖ She had also acted as an advisor to organisations like the World Bank.

- ❖ In 2007, she joined the Elders, a group of world leaders founded by Nelson Mandela to promote human rights and peace.

- ❖ She was a prodigious writer who penned in Anasuya, our Gujarati newsletter, a play on street vendors. One of her famous book was "We are Poor but We are Many".

- ❖ She was a recipient of the Padma Bhushan, Ramon Magsaysay Award and Indira Gandhi International Prize for Peace among many other awards.

About Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA):

- ❖ SEWA was born out of the Textile Labour Association (TLA) founded by Anasuya Sarabhai and Mahatma Gandhi in 1920 but it could not register as a trade union until 1972 because its members did not have an "employer" and were thus not seen as workers.
- ❖ In 1981, after the anti-reservation riots in which the Bhatts were targeted for supporting quotas for Dalits in medical education, the TLA broke up with SEWA.
- ❖ As early as in 1974, SEWA Bank was established to provide small loans to poor women.
- ❖ It is an initiative that was recognised by the International Labour Organisation as a microfinance movement.
- ❖ With an annual membership fee of just Rs 10, SEWA allows anyone who is self-employed to become a member.
- ❖ Its network is spread across 18 Indian states, in other countries of South Asia, in South Africa, and Latin America.
- ❖ It simultaneously provided employment to women and promoted cooperative production, consumption and marketing of textiles which constituted the core of India's industrialisation.
- ❖ The Unorganised Workers Social Security Act (2008), the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (2011), and the Street Vendors Act (2014), are seen as successes of SEWA's struggle.
- ❖ The PM Street Vendors Aatmanirbhar Nidhi (PM-SVANidhi) scheme is seen as being inspired by SEWA's microfinance model.
- ❖ During the pandemic, SEWA launched Anubandh, an e-commerce platform to connect sellers with buyers, to keep kitchen fires burning through the lockdowns.

- The efforts of SEWA to change the lives of over 2.1 million members and many more around the world have long been recognised as a model for the world.

12. PM Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana

Introduction:

The Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) is a rural development program in India launched by the central government in the fiscal year 2009–10 for the development of villages with more than 50% of the population belonging to the scheduled castes through the convergence of central and state schemes and the allocation of financial funding on a per village basis.

❖ Recently, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has revamped the existing Scheme of Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme (SCA to TSS) with Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojna for implementation during 2021-22 to 2025-26.

About Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana

Ministry:

❖ The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Objective:

❖ To ensure integrated development of the selected villages with more than 50% SC population so that there is:

- Adequate Infrastructure: All requisite infrastructure necessary for the socio-economic development needs are to be provided under the Scheme.

- Improvement in Socio-Economic Indicators: The identified socio-economic indicators, known as Monitorable Indicators, are to be improved so that the disparity between SC and non-

SC population is eliminated and the level of indicators is raised to at least that of the National average.

- o All BPL SC families should have food and livelihood security, all SC children should complete education at least up to the secondary level, all factors leading to maternal and infant mortality are addressed and incidence of malnutrition, especially amongst children and women, is eliminated.

There are 50 Monitorable Indicators under 10 domains:

- ❖ Drinking water and Sanitation
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Health and Nutrition
- ❖ Social Security
- ❖ Rural Roads and Housing
- ❖ Electricity and Clean Fuel
- ❖ Agricultural Practices etc.
- ❖ Financial Inclusion
- ❖ Digitization
- ❖ Livelihood and Skill Development

Vision of an 'Adarsh Gram':

- ❖ The Scheme provides for An 'Adarsh Gram' is one wherein people have access to various basic services so that the minimum needs of all the sections of the society are fully met and disparities are reduced to a minimum.
- ❖
- ❖ These villages would have all such infrastructure and its residents will have access to all such basic services that are necessary for a dignified living, creating thereby an environment in which everyone is enabled to utilize her/his potential to the fullest.

Conclusion:

A model village (Adarsh Gram) is one that has the adequate physical and institutional infrastructure, where the basic needs of all sections of society are met, and where people live in harmony with one another and

with the environment. It is also a progressive and dynamic village. These villages should be equipped with all of the amenities required for a dignified lifestyle, thereby creating an environment in which all of its residents can maximize their potential.