

Welfare schemes

- Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 aims to address child malnutrition and hunger.
- From 2021--22, the Anganwadi programme (ICDS) was merged with POSHAN Abhiyaan and a nutrition scheme for adolescent girls.
- According to National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5 data, the percentage of anaemic, underweight, and stunted children in India is 67%, 32%, and 36%, respectively, which is among the worst in the world.
- Another important nutrition scheme is the mid-day meal (MDM) scheme, covering almost 12 crore children. Evidence shows that the scheme has led to an improvement in class attendance, learning as well as nutritional outcomes, and reduced stunting in children.
- The PM Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) provides maternity benefits as a conditional cash transfer of ₹5,000 to women in the unorganised sector.
- To cover all women and births as per the National Food Security Act (NFSA) mandate, the scheme needs around ₹14,000 crores, but the PMMVY Budget is yet to cross ₹3,000 crore.
- MGNREGA guarantees 100 days of employment to every rural household whereas the NFSA provides subsidized grains to over 80 crore people.
- The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is a scheme that provides pensions to the elderly, widows, and disabled individuals below the poverty line and monetary assistance to families that have lost a breadwinner.



- According to the latest State of the World's Children report by UNICEF, India has the lowest vaccination rates in South Asia.
- Furthermore, India's out-of-pocket expenditure on health remains much higher than the global average, pushing millions into poverty each year.

THE HINDU

Asymmetric federalism

- A symmetric federalism has been a positive feature of India's polity, but even the most pragmatic

arrangement may not always guarantee harmonious relations between the Centre and its constituent units.

- In the latest verdict, a Constitution Bench has ruled that the elected government does indeed have control over administrative services.
- However, it is limited to services related to the extent of its current executive and legislative powers, which extend to all subjects under the State and Concurrent Lists, except for the three excluded ones public order, police, and land.
- The Centre's argument, that in the absence of a Public Services Commission for Delhi and in view of the phrase "insofar as such matter is applicable to Union Territories" the subject of 'services' will not fall under the Delhi government's remit, was rejected.
- The Court has emphasized the sui generis nature of Delhi, so that its Union Territory status is not used to limit the role of the elected government.
- The five-judge Bench ruling again underlines the principle that a representative regime should not be undermined by an unelected administrator.
- In practical terms, the provisions of the GNCTD (Amendment) Act, 2021,

which sought to strengthen the hand of the Lt. Governor in running Delhi, may continue to be a source of conflict.



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Model prison act

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has prepared the 'Model Prisons Act 2023,' that will replace a British-era law to overhaul the prison administration, which will focus on the reformation and rehabilitation of inmates, it said on Friday. .
- Among the salient features of the Act are provisions of punishment for prisoners and jail staff for use of prohibited items such as mobile phones in jails, establishment and management of high security jails, open jail, and provisions for protecting the society from the criminal activities of hardened criminals and habitual offenders.
- It also contains provisions for providing legal aid to prisoners,

parole, furlough, and premature release to incentivize good conduct

- Prisons in the country and ‘persons detained therein’ are a State subject and the existing law in this context, the Prisons Act of 1894 is a pre-independence era Act and is almost 130-years-old, it said.
- Two other related laws. The Prisoners Act, of 1900, and The Transfer of Prisoners Act, of 1950 are also decades-old.

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Bill against caste discrimination

- The California Senate has overwhelmingly passed a legislation seeking to explicitly ban caste discrimination, in a historic move that would make America’s most populous State also the country’s first to outlaw caste-based bias.



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