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15 June – Left Wing Extremism

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29 May – Lakshadweep – Importance

CHILD MARRIAGES

Issue/Analysis	Application/Think
Topic: Child Marriages	GS-I- Society
Context: The Global Girlhood Report 2020 says that at least half-a-million girls are now at risk of being victims of forced child marriages as this year comes to an end. Up to 2.5 million girls may be married early due to the pandemic over the next five years, says a Save the Children report.	Introduction
Pandemic & Child Marriages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased poverty is directly related to child marriage: In pandemic induced economic distress, vulnerable families are forced to choose between a girl child and the prospect of hunger & deprivation. A girl child is considered a burden, making her vulnerable to early marriage ● Marriage seen as safety net: One reason, cited by parents, in several surveys is that marriage is way of ensuring the girl child's safety at a time when many young men are out of jobs and seen as posing a danger to young girls. ● Interrupted Education: With so much uncertainty about when schools will reopen, there is every likelihood of girls not returning to school and this increases the danger of their being married early. ● Lack of access to counsellor: Without the safety net of schools, the girl child being forced into marriage is cut off from any possible communication with a teacher or counselor. Most of them do not have access to child helplines though the government has set these up. 	COVID-19 pandemic is estimated to disrupt the efforts made so far to end child marriage, and to result in 13 million more girls forced into early marriages between 2020 and 2030 . Evidence of an increase in child marriages is already emerging from places such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Nepal.
Consequences of Child Marriages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child marriage is not only a violation of girls' human rights and their children's, but also represents a substantial economic burden for countries (early child marriage => tendency for more children => higher population growth) ● Child brides are often robbed of their rights to safety and security, to health and education, and to make their own life choices and decisions 	The Economic Impacts of Child Marriage report estimates that a girl marrying at 13 will have on average 26 percent more children over her lifetime than if she had married at 18 or later.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child marriage brings with it the prospect of early pregnancy whereby the life of the girl and her unborn child are at much greater risk. • Early marriage heightens the risk of domestic slavery, spousal violence and poor health with girls married under the age of 15 almost 50% more likely to have experienced either physical or sexual intimate partner violence 	
<p>Institutional Mechanism in India to tackle Child Marriages The Juvenile Justice Care and Protection Act, 2015 has been given powers to safeguard the best interests of India's children. For these purposes various institutions have been created i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District Child Protection Unit is responsible for identification and rescues children in need of care and protection • Child Welfare Committee (CWC) at district level is accountable for ensuring the best interests of each child. • The district child protection committee headed by the chairperson of the zilla parishad is the nodal organisation at the district level to review and monitor the work related to ensuring child rights. <p>Issues with existing system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are child protection committees in each gram panchayat with mandate to identify such at-risk children. However, because of their apathetic attitude and inactiveness, these children are not being identified. • Children, whose marriages are stopped by govt/NGOs, are not being produced in most cases before the CWCs. • They are often sent back to their parents if they are produced before the CWC. This has resulted in forced marriage of such girls in secrecy. Others have been forced to reside in the same socioeconomic cultural situation, leading to frustration and anxiety. • Child brides being beaten by their husbands is no longer be included in national health survey (which among other things collects data on domestic violence) 	<p>India accounts for more than 20% of the world's adolescent population and the highest number of child marriages in South Asia, according to UNICEF.</p> <p>Only 14% women who suffered domestic violence sought help from the police, and of them only 3% reached out to the police, the health survey data shows</p> <p>The Juvenile Justice act is being amended by Parliament to strengthen Child protection measures.</p>

Improving girls' educational attainment and health, as well as increased earnings, decision-making power and control over their reproductive rights are few of the positive consequences of ending child marriage, together with a positive impact on the reduction of maternal and infant mortality

Conclusion

SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS

Issue/Analysis	Application/Value Add/ Think
<p>Topic: Simultaneous Elections</p> <p>Background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post adoption of the Constitution, the elections to Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies were held simultaneously between 1951 till 1967. • However, due to the premature dissolution of some Legislative Assemblies in 1968 and 1969, the cycle got disrupted for the first time • In the last 30 years, there has not been a single year without an election to either a State Assembly or to Lok Sabha or both. <p>Definition: The "Simultaneous Elections" is defined as structuring the Indian election cycle in a manner that elections to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies are synchronized together</p>	<p>GS-II- Polity</p> <p>Article 83(2) of the Constitution provides for a normal term of five years for the Lok Sabha). Article 172 (1) provides for similar tenure for State Legislative Assembly from the date of its first sitting. Both can be dissolved earlier than their normal terms.</p>
<p>Arguments for Simultaneous Elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less disruption to development: Frequent imposition of Model Code of Conduct leads to suspension of developmental projects and other government activities. • Lowers Populism: Frequent elections make Governments and political parties remain in perpetual "campaigning" mode. Electoral compulsions change the focus of policy making. Short-sighted populist and "politically safe" measures are accorded higher priority over "difficult" long term structural reforms. • Reduced election expenditure: Simultaneous elections would reduce the massive expenditure incurred for the conduct of separate elections every year. • Lowers Social Tension: Elections are also polarizing events which perpetuate caste, religion and communal 	<p>Law Commission Working Paper on Simultaneous elections</p> <p>It may be restored through an amendment of the Constitution, Representation of the People Act, 1951 and Rules of Procedure of Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. A definition may be added to section 2 of the 1951 Act.</p>

<p>issues because candidates are often 'forced to talk politically' for the sake of electoral benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimum use of manpower: Simultaneous elections would free crucial manpower which is often deployed for prolonged periods on election duties. For example, the 2014 Lok Sabha elections (held with four Assembly elections) was spread over nine phases and 1,077 in -situ companies and 1,349 mobile companies of CAPF were deployed. 	<p>The no-confidence motion may be replaced with a constructive vote of no-confidence through amendments in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies rules of business</p>
<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutionality: Various political parties have questioned its do-ability given the existing constitutional and statutory provisions with regards to tenure of various Assemblies and Parliament (Article 83(2) and 172(1)) • Operational Feasibility: There are question like -How would terms of Assemblies/Lok Sabha be synchronized for the first time? Would it be feasible to extend or curtail the existing terms of some State Assemblies to facilitate the above? If elections are held simultaneously, what would happen in case the ruling party or coalition loses majority in between term? • Impact to voter behavior: Some political parties argue that it may influence voter behaviour in a manner that voters would end up voting on national issues even for State elections and this may lead to larger national parties winning both State and Lok Sabha elections thereby marginalizing regional parties. • Reverses Deepening of Democracy: By strangulating the scope for regional parties which reflect local aspirations/issues simultaneous elections will reverse the process of deepening democracy. • Accountability reduced: Having to face electorate more than once every 5 year enhances the accountability of politicians and keeps them on their toes • Impact on economy: It is argued that any jobs are created during elections, boosting the economy at the grass-root levels. Simultaneous elections can rob people of elections provided job opportunities. 	<p>What factors influences voting in India?</p> <p>Do regional parties deepen or fragment Indian Democracy?</p> <p>Mail us your opinions to team@iasbaba.com.</p> <p>Political scientist Suhas Palshikar says, simultaneous or synchronised polls in the early years were an “accident of history”.</p> <p>Model Code of Conduct does not in come in the way of normal administration or dealing with emergencies. What it does prevent is a government’s desire to “buy” votes by announcing a bunch of projects immediately before an election.</p>
<p>'One Nation One Poll' is a good idea for Indian polity but its feasibility needs to be thoroughly examined by involving all</p>	<p>Conclusion</p>

the stakeholders in debate and discussion. The idea will require unprecedented political will and support.

Issue/Analysis	Application/Value Add/ Think
Topic: Election Challenges	GS-II- Governance
<p>Simultaneous Polls are not the Panacea for the Ills Plaguing Indian Democracy. Some of the reforms needed are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To find alternate ways of conducting elections at all levels with minimum cost and in a free and fair manner, and to re-look at the duration of restrictions under poll codes • Efforts have to be made to curb the misuse of the government machinery by the incumbent party to its political advantage in elections • To consider the proportional representation of elections in the place of the first-past-the post electoral system (FPTP) • Bring political parties under a regulatory framework and into a transparency regime by bringing them under the Right to Information (RTI) Act. • The Prime Minister and chief ministers should be elected in a similar way as the speakers of parliament and assembly. • The whip system on the floor of legislatures should be limited to exceptional situations. 	Useful for essays

