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1. Draft National Labour & Employment Policy - 2025

- **Prelims** -Draft National Labour& Employment Policy 2025
- **Mains** - GS 2 - Governance

Why in the news?

- The Ministry of Labour & Employment has released the Draft National Labour & Employment Policy – Shram Shakti Niti 2025 for public consultation.

Draft National Labour & Employment Policy – Shram Shakti Niti 2025

- **What is it?:** Shram Shakti Niti 2025 is India's first integrated National Labour & Employment Policy, aiming to create a fair, inclusive, and future-ready world of work.
- **Aim:** To modernise India's labour ecosystem by ensuring dignity, protection, and opportunity for every worker while aligning with Viksit Bharat @2047.
- **Features:**
 - **Unified Vision and Mission:** Builds a world of work where every labourer has dignity, safety, and opportunity through seven goals — social security, safety, gender and youth empowerment, future-readiness, and green jobs.
 - **Digital Public Infrastructure for Employment:** National Career Service (NCS) to become India's Employment DPI with AI-based job matching, skill verification, and career guidance across smaller cities.
 - **Universal Social Security:** A single Universal Social Security Account will link EPFO, ESIC, PM-JAY, and e-Shram for lifelong, portable worker protection.
 - **Women and Youth Empowerment:** Aims for 35% female workforce participation by 2030; supports flexible work, childcare, start-ups, and skill training for youth.
 - **Ease of Compliance and Formalisation:** Introduces one digital compliance portal with self-certification, reducing paperwork and encouraging trust-based governance.
 - **Technology and Green Transitions:** Promotes AI-enabled safety systems, digital upskilling, and creation of green jobs aligned with climate goals.



- **Convergence and Good Governance:** Sets up National, State, and District Labour Missions with data dashboards and an annual Labour & Employment Policy Evaluation Index (LEPEI) for tracking progress.
- **Labour and Employment Stack:** Builds a digital backbone linking worker IDs, enterprise data, and welfare schemes for paperless, portable governance.
- **Tripartite Dialogue & Cooperative Federalism:** Strengthens coordination among Centre, States, employers, and workers for joint policy implementation.
- **Implementation Phases:**
 - ★ Phase I (2025–27): Institutional setup, digital pilots, and social-security integration.
 - ★ Phase II (2027–30): Expansion through Universal Social Security rollout and AI-based job matching.
 - ★ Phase III (Beyond 2030): Full digital convergence and predictive labour governance.



2. India's Engagement with Taliban-Ruled Afghanistan

- **Prelims** - India's engagement with Taliban Ruled Afghanistan
- **Mains** - GS 2 - International Relations

Why in the news?

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi for a formal meeting on Friday, the first time New Delhi has officially hosted a leader of the Taliban regime that took power in Kabul in 2021

India's Engagement with Taliban-Ruled Afghanistan

- **Strategic Context:**
 - **Security Concerns:** India aims to ensure Afghan soil is not used by anti-Indian terrorist groups, like ISIS-K or Pakistan-backed factions.
 - **Geopolitical Shifts:**
 - ★ **Pakistan:** Strained relations with the Taliban offer India a strategic opening.
 - ★ **China:** Increasing its presence in Afghanistan, engaging diplomatically, and investing in resources.
 - ★ **Russia and Iran:** Both have reduced focus due to domestic and regional challenges.
- **Previous Diplomatic Engagement Timeline:**
 - **Initial Contact (2021):** Indian officials met Taliban representatives in Qatar post-US troop withdrawal.
 - **Technical Team (2022):** Sent to Kabul to monitor the situation and maintain limited engagement.
- **India's Objectives:**
 - **Humanitarian Aid:** Continuation of food, medicine, and healthcare support to Afghanistan.
 - **Development Projects:** Safeguarding and possibly resuming India's \$3 billion investments in Afghan infrastructure.
 - **Connectivity Initiatives:** Utilizing Chabahar Port to enhance trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia.



- **Taliban's Response:**

- Taliban has welcomed Indian assistance and expressed interest in India's continued investment in development projects.
- Guaranteed the safety of Indian interests and infrastructure in Afghanistan.

- **Challenges in Engagement:**

- **Women's Rights:** India shares global concerns over the Taliban's restrictions on women and minorities.
- **Recognition Debate:** Engagement without granting official recognition to the Taliban regime.
- **Regional Instability:** Influence of China, Pakistan, and the potential return of the US under Donald Trump.

- **Strategic Imperatives:**

- **Countering China:** India's proactive approach is crucial to offset China's growing influence in Afghanistan.
- **Regional Stability:** Ensuring a secure Afghanistan to prevent spillover of instability into the region.

3. UN Peacekeeping Forces (UNPK)

- **Prelims** - UN Peacekeeping Forces
- **Mains** - GS 2 - International Relations

UN Peacekeeping Forces (UNPK)



Why in the news?

- UN to cut 25% of its global peacekeeping force in response to U.S. funding strains.

UN Peacekeeping Forces (UNPK)

- **What is it?:** The UN Peacekeeping Forces were established when the UN Security Council approved the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East in 1948.
- **Aim:** UN peacekeeping forces assist nations in transitioning from war to peace, carrying out missions approved by the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the UN General Assembly.
- **Guiding Principles**
 - Consent of the parties
 - Impartiality
 - Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate



- **Composition:** It deploys soldiers, police, and civilian peacekeepers from around the world to carry out peacekeeping missions.
- **India's Contribution** - India has deployed more than 2,75,000 troops, including a significant number of women peacekeepers, in over 51 U.N. peacekeeping missions. It has also deployed significant civilian and police personnel, including an all-women contingent (since 2007).

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4. National Red List Assessment

- **Prelims** - National Red List Assessment
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Environment

Why in the News?

- India has launched the National Red List Assessment initiative during the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi.

National Red List Assessment

- **Purpose:** To fulfil India's commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) by establishing a national mechanism for species threat assessment.
- **Significance:**
 - India, being among the world's 17 megadiverse countries, hosts 4 of the 36 global biodiversity hotspots (Himalayas, Western Ghats, Indo-Burma, Sundaland).
 - The NRLA will align India's assessments with IUCN global standards, enabling coherence with international processes.
 - The initiative is intended to bridge science, policy & local knowledge (e.g. by documenting traditional knowledge for conservation).
- **Biodiversity statistics:** Though India has ~2.4% of the world's land area, it harbours ~8% of global flora and ~7.5% of fauna. About 28% of plants and over 30% of animals in India are endemic.
- **Features:**
 - **Objective:** To create a **nationally coordinated red-listing system** aligned with global IUCN standards- for assessment, conservation planning, and policymaking.
 - **Time frame:** To publish **National Red Data Books** for both flora and fauna by **2030**.



- **Implementation:** Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC) will spearhead the initiative, while Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) & Botanical Survey of India (BSI) as nodal institutions.
- Emphasis on **traditional knowledge** documentation, precision in species identification, collaboration across domains.
- **Challenges Associated:**
 - India has significant **data gaps** for many taxa- undertaking a comprehensive national red listing will require extensive fieldwork, taxonomic expertise, and funding.
 - Ensuring **uniform methodology, capacity building**, and coordination across states and institutions will be vital.
 - Integration of **traditional / indigenous knowledge** must be done carefully, respecting rights and scientific validity.
 - The utility of Red Lists depends on translating assessments into **on-ground conservation action, policy measures, habitat protection**, etc.



5. National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)

- **Prelims** - National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Economy

Why in the news?

- The Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has expanded the ambit of e-NAM by adding nine new commodities taking the total number of commodities under e-NAM to 247.

National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)

- **What is it?:** It is a central sector scheme launched in 2016 as a pan-India electronic trading portal that connects existing agricultural produce market committees (APMCs) to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.
- **Implementation:** Implemented by the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Unified Market Platform:** A common online trading portal accessible to all APMC mandis connected under e-NAM.
 - **Inter-State Trade:** Allows farmers to sell produce to buyers across states (One Nation, One Market).
 - **Quality Testing:** Assaying facilities for quality grading and price linkage to quality parameters.
 - **Payment System:** Integrated with electronic payment options through **BHIM, UPI, RTGS/NEFT**.
 - **Single trading license** valid across all e-NAM mandis within a state.
 - **Logistics Support:** e-NAM platform linked to warehousing and logistics providers for storage and transport.
 - **Farmer Facilitation Centres:** Provide training, internet access, and handholding to farmers for digital trading.
- **e-NAM 2.0:**
 - **Integration with Platform of Platforms (PoP)** in 2023 to link e-NAM with private agri-marketplaces, FPO platforms, warehousing, and e-commerce players.



- **AI-enabled Market Intelligence System** for real-time price analytics.
- **“Kisan Rath” app integration** for transport logistics.
- **e-Negotiation Module** for bulk buyers and exporters.
- **Blockchain pilots** in commodity tracking for transparency.
- **Advantages of e-NAM:**
 - Farmers receive **better price realization** due to competitive bidding.
 - Promotes **uniformity in agricultural marketing** across states.
 - Reduces role of **middlemen and malpractices** in auctions.
 - Enables **data-driven policy** through digital trade records.
 - Strengthens **Digital India** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiatives in agriculture.
- **Challenges:**
 - **APMC Act variation** among states delays full integration.
 - **Digital divide** and poor internet access in rural areas.
 - Limited **awareness and training** among small farmers.
 - **Inadequate assaying and grading infrastructure.**
 - Low share of **inter-state trade** despite potential.
- **Way Forward:**
 - Uniform **agri-marketing reforms** across all states.
 - Strengthen **digital literacy & infrastructure** in rural mandis.
 - Incentivize **FPO participation** and private sector linkages.
 - Enhance **assaying, warehousing, and logistics connectivity.**
 - Integrate e-NAM with **agri-export hubs** and **AgriStack** data ecosystem.



6. 'Saksham' Counter-Unmanned Aerial System Grid System

- **Prelims** - 'Saksham' Counter-Unmanned Aerial System Grid System
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Science and Technology

Why in the news?

- Indian Army inducted Saksham Counter-UAS Grid system to secure tactical battlefield space, ensuring comprehensive airspace security.

'Saksham' Counter-Unmanned Aerial System Grid System

- **What is it?:**
 - **Saksham** stands for "Situational Awareness for Kinetic Soft and Hard Kill Assets Management".
 - It is an **indigenous Counter-Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) grid** being procured by the Indian Army.
 - It is essentially a **command & control network / grid** of sensors, radars, data fusion, and "soft" and "hard" kill mechanisms, aimed at detecting, tracking, identifying, and neutralising hostile drones / UAVs in real time.
- **Need:**
 - The increasing use of drones / UAVs has created new vulnerabilities in battlefield airspace, especially in the zone just above ground forces, often called air littoral or tactical battlefield space.
 - During Operation Sindoor (India's cross-border strike in April 2025), drone incursions across the border revealed gaps in detection, response coordination, and real-time airspace control.
 - The Army now envisions expanding its concept from Tactical Battle Area (TBA) to Tactical Battlefield Space (TBS), i.e. controlling the airspace up to a certain altitude (approx. 3,000 metres / 10,000 ft) above ground. Saksham is intended to operate in that domain.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Production:** The system is being produced by **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Ghaziabad**.
 - **Domain:** Covers airspace up to ~ **3,000 m (10,000 ft)** above ground (Tactical Battlefield Space).



- It will integrate data from multiple sensors (radars, electro-optical, RF, etc.), hostile and friendly UAV inputs, to present a **Recognised UAS Picture**.
- **Command Module:** A GIS-based platform for real-time visualisation, decision support, and control of “kill assets” (soft kill, hard kill).
- **Modes of Kill:**
 - ★ Soft kill = electronic means (jamming, spoofing, RF interference)
 - ★ Hard kill = kinetic means (shooting down with missiles, projectiles)
- **Network:** Will operate over the **Army Data Network (ADN)** to ensure secure, real-time data sharing among formations.
- **Interoperability:** Will link/interoperate with existing air defence surveillance systems (e.g. Akashteer) to form a holistic airspace control.
- **Significance:**
 - **Airspace Control for Ground Forces:** By managing the air littoral zone over troops, it enables friendly UAVs / aerial assets to operate safely, while denying that advantage to adversary drones.
 - **Force Multiplier:** Real-time situational awareness and quick, automated threat neutralisation can substantially improve responsiveness and reduce delays in decision making.
 - **Indigenisation & Atmanirbharta:** Fully indigenous development and production by BEL aligns with “Make in India / self-reliance in defence.”
 - **Multi-Domain Warfare Preparedness:** Reflects the shift towards 3D battle spaces, encompassing land, air, and “air above land,” to face modern asymmetric / drone threats.
 - **Deterrence & Tactical Edge:** A robust counter-drone grid can deter enemy UAV incursions, surveillance, or loitering munitions.