

UPSC Syllabus Topic : GS Paper 3 Indian Economy – Issues relating to employment.

On the Overseas Demand for Indian Labour

In response to the growing demand for skilled workers in construction, agriculture, and manufacturing sectors in developed nations, India has been increasingly sought after for its labor force. Recent developments highlight:

Flurry of mobility and migration agreements signed by India in recent years

AGREEMENTS SIGNED

France	2018
United Kingdom	2021
Germany	2022
Finland	2022
Australia	2023
Austria	2023
Italy	2023

UNDER DISCUSSIONS

Netherland, Taiwan, South Korea, Greece, Denmark

Source : MEA

1. Demand for Indian Labor:

- Greece is seeking up to 10,000 seasonal agricultural workers due to a severe shortage in its domestic production of vegetables, fruit, olive oil, and milk.
- Italy requires workers to staff municipal bodies in depopulated towns.
- Israel, after a recent agreement to employ 42,000 Indian workers, aims to fill nearly 90,000 jobs previously held by Palestinians.

- India signed a Migration and Mobility Partnership with Italy, where a significant number of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) work in the farm and dairy sectors. A similar agreement was signed with France in 2018.

2. Government Initiatives:

- **Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY)** is a skill development program by the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Skill Development. It trains Indian workers aspiring for overseas jobs in line with global standards.
- **Skill India International Centres (SIICS):** The government plans to establish 30 SIICS to offer skill training, immigration assistance, and post-placement support. These centers aim to provide domain-specific training and pre-departure orientation to candidates.
- **Labor Agreements:** India has signed 17 agreements with various countries between 2015 and 2023, facilitating labor movement.

These steps by the government, such as skill development initiatives, establishing international skill centers, and signing labor agreements, aim to meet the rising demand for Indian labor in various sectors abroad while ensuring the workforce is equipped with necessary skills and support for overseas employment.

UPSC Syllabus Topic : GS Paper 3 – Internal Security – Organised crime

Drug problem in Punjab – A promise to keep

The drug problem in Punjab is substantial, evident from statistics and societal impacts:

Scale of the Issue:

- **FIRs and Addiction:** From April 2022 to February 2023, Punjab Police filed 11,156 drug-related FIRs, with 25% involving pharmaceutical drugs. Roughly 10 lakh individuals are grappling with addiction.
- **Gender Impacts:** Women are involved in 10% of these cases, emphasizing gender-specific repercussions.
- **Deaths Due to Overdoses:** Despite efforts, 266 overdose deaths were reported from 2020 to 2023.

Reasons for the Drug Problem:

- **Geographical Vulnerability:** Punjab's location in the Golden Crescent fosters drug trade, especially heroin and cocaine trafficking.
- **Socioeconomic Factors:** Poverty pushes individuals, notably women from marginalized communities, into the narcotics trade.
- **Systemic Challenges:** Organized drug networks evade capture due to loopholes in law enforcement.
- **Changing Availability:** Preference shift from heroin (Chitta) to pharmaceutical opioids reflects evolving drug availability.

Punjab Government Initiatives:

- **Awareness and Rehabilitation:** Campaigns like cyclothons and street plays raise awareness and promote rehabilitation.
- **Anti-Drug Committees:** All-women committees combat drug abuse in some Malwa region villages.
- **Legislative Actions:** Use of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act in filing 11,156 cases from April 2022 to February 2023.

The Way Forward:

- **Combat Drug Networks:** Strengthen actions against drug networks and improve education and employment opportunities for vulnerable populations.
- **Legal Strengthening:** Address loopholes in legal systems to curb trafficking effectively.
- **Rehabilitation Focus:** Emphasize sustained rehabilitation efforts and target high-level traffickers to reduce both supply and demand.

Addressing the drug problem in Punjab demands concerted efforts, including stronger law enforcement, social support, and rehabilitation programs aimed at vulnerable communities.