



Current Affairs for UPSC IAS Exam – 21 October 2021 | Legacy IAS Academy

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[Covid-19 and rise in child sexual abuse online](#)

Context:

The Global Threat Assessment report 2021, by WeProtect Global Alliance said COVID-19 had contributed to a significant spike in child sexual exploitation and abuse online.

Relevance:

GS-II: Social Justice and Governance (Issues related to Children, Vulnerable Sections)

Dimensions of the Article:



1. Global Threat Assessment report 2021
2. Report: Most Online Content on Child Sexual Abuse from India
3. What the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) said?
4. What the India Child Protection Fund (ICPF) said?
5. Child Abuse in India
6. Convention on Rights of Child, 1989
7. About Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012

Global Threat Assessment report 2021

- WeProtect Global Alliance is a global movement of more than 200 governments, private sector companies and civil society organisations working together to transform the global response to child sexual exploitation and abuse online.
- The report was a meta study that distils findings from multiple international studies on the issue.
- The findings show that in the past two years, the reporting of child sexual exploitation and online abuse has reached its highest level.
- The rise in child 'self-generated' sexual material is another trend that challenges the existing response – a 77% increase in child 'self-generated' sexual material from 2019 to 2020 was observed according to the report.
- The report also featured a survey of technology companies that showed most were using tools to detect child sexual abuse material, but only 37% currently use tools to detect online grooming.
- The report calls for prioritising prevention activities against abuse, creating safe online environments for children, besides calling on all with a role to protect children to work together to dramatically improve the response.

Report: Most Online Content on Child Sexual Abuse from India

- In a global compilation of reports of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) found online, **India stands right on top of the list, with 11.7% of the total reports** (almost 20 lakh reports), followed by Pakistan, which contributes 6.8% of all reports (11.5 lakh reports) and Bangladesh comes in fourth with 5.5 lakh reports and a share of 3.3%.
- In 2019, the Centre received a total of 1.68 crore reports of child sexual abuse material - reported by the members of the public and electronic service providers, principally comprising still pictures and videos depicting children in a clear sexual angle.



Unhealthy trend

Consumption of child pornography online increased nearly two-fold after the lockdown was imposed

- Traffic to child pornographic websites from India increased 95% between March 24 and 26 compared to that before the lockdown

- Keyword searches for "child porn", "sexy child" and "teen sex videos" increased significantly

- In a survey conducted on demand for child

pornography in 100 cities in December 2019, it was found that there were 5 million downloads on average per month

- Under Section 15 of the POCSO Act, a person who stores child porn for commercial purposes shall face imprisonment for up to 3 years or will have to pay a fine or face both punishments

What the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) said?

- During the pandemic, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) indicated 106% increase in reports of suspected child sexual exploitation to its global CyberTipline.
- During the COVID-19 lockdown in India, there was a 95% rise in searches for child sexual abuse material, the NCMEC reported.
- The NCMEC adds that the reports include geographic indicators related to the upload location of the child sexual abuse material, but country specific numbers may be impacted by proxies and anonymisers.
- The NCMEC urges people to report CSAM found online across the world annually, on their online platform CyberTipline.

What the India Child Protection Fund (ICPF) said?



- The India Child Protection Fund (ICPF) said in a statement that Traffic from India increased by 95% between March 24 and 26, as compared to average traffic before the lockdown.
- The spike in consumption indicates millions of paedophiles, child rapists and child pornography addicts have migrated online, making the Internet extremely unsafe for children.
- Without stringent action, this could result in a drastic rise in sexual crimes against children.
- As children spend more time online during the lockdown, international agencies like Europol, the United Nations and ECPAT (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) have reported that paedophiles and child pornography addicts have increased activity to target children online to 'groom' them — befriending them on social media, building an emotional connection and luring them to perform sexual activities through photos and videos.
- It also pointed out there was an increase in demand for violent content involving children.
- It demands an urgent crackdown on child pornography through a pan-India tracker through the use of artificial intelligence which can monitor hosting, sharing, viewing and downloading of child sexual abuse material and provide the information to the government agencies.

Child Abuse in India

- While we have successfully brought in children-specific legislations such as the Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 (POCSO) and the amended Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015, our performance in creating robust and reliable preventive response systems has been markedly poor.
- The spate of brutal crimes against children demonstrates that our collective approach to child safety in schools remains ad hoc, laissez-faire and poorly monitored, highlighting the lack of both soft and hard preventive infrastructure.
- Every six minutes, a child goes missing. More than 4.5 lakh children have been victims of trafficking, bought, sold for commercial and sexual exploitation. Over 50% children in India were subjected to one or another form of physical abuse. In 94.8 percent of cases, children were raped by someone known to them, according to data collected by the National Crime Records Bureau.

Convention on Rights of Child, 1989

- According to the convention, any child below the age of 18 is called a child. Around 140



countries have signed the convention.

- India is also a signatory. The convention sets out social, political, economic, civil and cultural rights of every child.
- The rights include right to education, right to protection against physical abuse, right to rest and leisure.

About Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012

- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 was enacted to provide a robust legal framework for the protection of children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography, while safeguarding the interest of the child at every stage of the judicial process.
- The framing of the Act seeks to put children first by making it easy to use by including mechanisms for child-friendly reporting, recording of evidence, investigation and speedy trial of offences through designated Special Courts.
- The Act provides for a variety of offences under which an accused can be punished. It recognises forms of penetration other than penile-vaginal penetration and criminalises acts of immodesty against children too.

Offences under the act include:

- Penetrative Sexual Assault: Insertion of penis/object/another body part in child's vagina/urethra/anus/mouth, or asking the child to do so with them or some other person
- Sexual Assault: When a person touches the child, or makes the child touch them or someone else
- Sexual Harassment: passing sexually coloured remark, sexual gesture/noise, repeatedly following, flashing, etc.
- Child Pornography
- Aggravated Penetrative Sexual Assault/ Aggravated Sexual Assault
- The act is gender-neutral for both children and for the accused.
- With respect to pornography, the Act criminalises even watching or collection of pornographic content involving children.
- The Act makes abetment of child sexual abuse an offence.

-Source: *The Hindu*



[UNEP production gap report 2021](#)

Context:

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recently released its report called “2021 Production Gap Report”. According to the report, government’s plan to produce fossil fuels will evade the Paris Deal limits.

Relevance:

GS-III: Environment and Ecology (Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Conservation of Environment and Ecology, International Treaties and Agreements, International Organizations and their reports)

Dimensions of the Article:

1. About UNEP’s Production Gap Report
2. Highlights of the 2021 Production Gap Report
3. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

About UNEP’s Production Gap Report

- The Production Gap Report was first launched in 2019 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- The Production Gap Report tracks the discrepancy between governments’ planned fossil fuel production and global production levels consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C or 2°C.
- The report represents a collaboration of several researchers and academic institutions, including input from more than 40 experts.



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- UNEP staff provided guidance and insights from their experience leading other gap reports.

2021 Production Gap Report

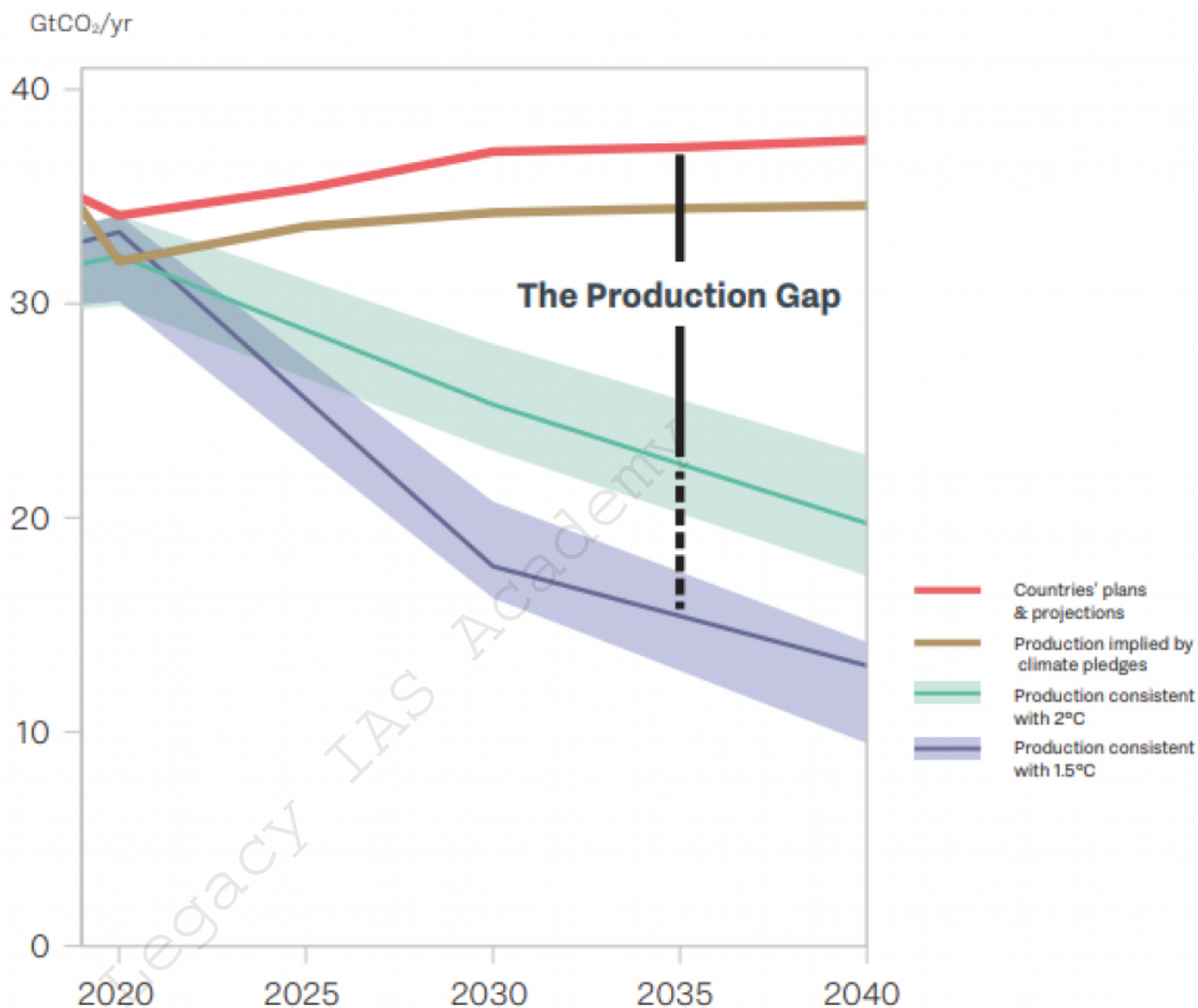
- The 2021 report presents the first comprehensive update of the production gap analysis since our 2019 assessment.
- The report also tracks how governments worldwide are supporting fossil fuel production through their policies, investments, and other measures, as well as how some are beginning to discuss and enact policies towards a managed and equitable transition away from fossil fuel production.
- The 2021 report features individual country profiles for 15 major fossil fuel-producing countries and a special chapter on the role of transparency in helping to address the production gap.
- Assessment of the production gap is based on recent and publicly accessible plans and projections for fossil fuel production published by governments and affiliated institutions.

Highlights of the 2021 Production Gap Report

- As per report, despite increasing climate ambitions and net-zero commitments, governments are planning to produce more than double amount of fossil fuels in the year 2030 than what was required for limiting global warming to 1.5°C.
- The climate crisis has become clearer than ever, but it has not been able to compel major emitters to improve action on the ground so far.
- The production gap to achieve the climate goal is the widest for coal: Production plans and projections by governments would lead to around 240 per cent more coal, 57 per cent more oil, and 71 per cent more gas in 2030 than global levels consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C.
- The most worrying factor is that almost all major coal, oil and gas producers are planning to increase their production till at least 2030 or beyond.
- This has been fuelled by incremental capital flow towards fossil fuels in comparison to clean energy in the post novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) recovery phase. The Group of 20 countries has channelised \$300 billion to fossil fuels since the beginning of the pandemic, and the sector is still enjoying significant fiscal incentives.
- The world does not have any more time to alter its trajectory of energy use from fossil to clean energy, and a slight deviation in the coming decade will have a substantial burden of adversaries to our future generations, as we will be locked into long-term human-induced global warming beyond 2 degrees Celsius.



Global fossil fuel production





Country	Planned/projected change in national fossil fuel production for 2030 relative to 2019 (EJ)		
	Coal	Oil	Gas
Australia	■	▲ 0.2 EJ	▲ 0.6 EJ
Brazil	●	▲ 5.3 EJ	▲ 1.3 EJ
Canada	▼ 0.5 EJ	▲ 1.4 EJ	▲ 0.3 EJ
China	▼ 9.2 EJ	▲ 0.6 EJ	▲ 3.8 EJ
Germany	▼ 0.6 EJ	●	●
India*	▲ 6.1 EJ	▲ 0.5 EJ	▲ 0.8 EJ
Indonesia	■	▼ 0.7 EJ	▼ 0.2 EJ
Mexico	●	▲ 2.4 EJ	▲ 0.5 EJ
Norway	●	▲ 0.3 EJ	▼ 0.6 EJ
Russia	▲ 3.6 EJ	■	▲ 4.3 EJ
Saudi Arabia	●	▲ 7.1 EJ	▲ 4.7 EJ
South Africa	No available projections	●	●
United Arab Emirates	●	▲ 1.9 EJ	No available projections
United Kingdom	●	▼ 1.2 EJ	▼ 0.7 EJ
United States	▼ 4.3 EJ	▲ 5.2 EJ	▲ 3.8 EJ

* For India, changes shown are for 2024 relative to 2019.

- ▲ Denotes an increase of greater than 5% by 2030, relative to 2019 production in energy terms.
- ▼ Denotes a decrease of greater than 5% by 2030, relative to 2019 production in energy terms.
- Denotes change in production by 2030 stays within 5% of 2019 production in energy terms.
- Annual production in 2019 is less than 0.5 EJ.



United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

- The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is a leading global environmental authority established in 1972 and Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya.
- It sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the sustainable development within the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate for global environment protection.
- The UNEP Publishes:
 - Emission Gap Report,
 - Global Environment Outlook,
 - Frontiers,
 - Invest into Healthy Planet.

-Source: Down to Earth Magazine

[Experts call for review of IMF role](#)

Context:

Leading experts have suggested the need to review the role of IMF due to changing economic weight of emerging countries, stressing on completing quota reforms and maintaining data integrity amid the World Bank discontinuing its Ease of Doing Business reports.

Relevance:

GS-III: Indian Economy (International Organizations)



Dimensions of the Article:

1. International Monetary Fund (IMF)
2. Functions of the IMF
3. About the current Need for IMF Reforms
4. Proposed Reforms

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international organization headquartered in Washington, D.C.
- It consists of 189 countries working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world.
- It periodically depends on the World Bank for its resources.
- Through the fund and other activities such as the gathering of statistics and analysis, surveillance of its members' economies, and the demand for particular policies, the IMF works to improve the economies of its member countries.

Functions of the IMF

- To provide financial assistance to member countries with balance of payments problems, the IMF lends money to replenish international reserves, stabilize currencies and strengthen conditions for economic growth. Countries must embark on structural adjustment policies monitored by the IMF.
- It oversees the international monetary system and monitors the economic and financial policies of its 189 member countries. As part of this process, which takes place both at the global level and in individual countries, the IMF highlights possible risks to stability and advises on needed policy adjustments.
- It provides technical assistance and training to central banks, finance ministries, tax authorities, and other economic institutions. This helps countries raise public revenues, modernize banking systems, develop strong legal frameworks, improve governance, and enhance the reporting of macroeconomic and financial data. It also helps countries to make progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

About the current Need for IMF Reforms



- The IMF's quota system was created to raise funds for loans and each IMF member country is assigned a quota, or contribution, that reflects the country's relative size in the global economy.
- Since each member's quota also determines its relative voting power as well as its borrowing capacity - this makes wealthy countries have more say in the making and revision of rules.
- This leads to the problem where countries that grow economically have tended to become under-represented as their voting power lags behind. For eg: BRICS countries.

Proposed Reforms

- The quota reform would reflect the changed economic realities, especially with regard to the increasing capabilities of the developing nations. For example, the quota of BRICS countries should increase and that of European Union Countries should decrease. Also, it is important that the new quota formula give more weight to PPP GDP to better reflect the true economic strength of emerging markets and developing economies.
- The IMF should focus on lower income countries and support other developing countries' market funds raising activities, as its Article IV consultation reports are utilised by credit rating agencies, impacting the fund raising capacity of countries like India. Most of the Asian countries including India can now raise funds on their own on the basis of strength of their forex reserves, and do not have to necessarily go to the IMF like in the past to tide of crisis.
- The management system in the IMF should be modified. In the IMF and World Bank group, there is an informal arrangement, that the head of the IMF should be a European and the head of the World Bank should be an American. The time has come to reconsider this, and the IMF probably should really rethink it.

-Source: Indian Express

[China's economy weakens](#)

Context:



China's National Bureau of Statistics has reported that third-quarter Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth has slowed to 4.9%, hence, there are concerns that a slowing Chinese economy could impact the incipient global recovery and regional economies like India as well.

Relevance:

GS-III: Indian Economy (Growth and Development of Indian, Economy, Foreign Trade)

Dimensions of the Article:

1. Why is China's Growth slowing down?
2. Impact of this Chinese Economy slowdown

Why is China's Growth slowing down?

- China did well in reviving economic growth after the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the reference point of higher levels of growth rate in the previous quarter is resulting in a lower growth rate.
- China is going through a 'mature' stage of economic development i.e., an economy which has witnessed a double-digit growth for two decades is bound to face a slowdown.
- A surge in coal prices and a resultant electricity shortage prompted provincial governments to cut power supplies. This fuel/power crisis in China continues to affect factories and units across the country's industrial heartland in its south east have had to curtail output.
- The Real Estate Sector which accounts for about a quarter of China's GDP, is now beginning to show signs of perceptible slowdown. The reason for this slowdown can be primarily attributed to the Evergrande fiasco – wherein the real estate giant (Evergrande) in China is struggling to avoid defaulting on billions of dollars owed to bond holders.

Impact of this Chinese Economy slowdown



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- China's control of pandemic and restarting its industries has played an instrumental role in the post-pandemic global economic recovery.
 - The Chinese economy falling into systemic risks could lead to overall loss of momentum to the global post-pandemic economic recovery.
 - US-China trade war, has resulted in slowdown in Chinese exports resulting in losses for the countries (especially South Asian Countries) that depend on China for 'Supply Value Chain' for producing components and other finished goods.

Impact on India

- India depends majorly on imports from China including smartphones and automobile components, telecom equipment, active pharmaceutical ingredients, and other chemicals and India's bilateral trade with China has grown nearly 50% in the first nine months of 2021. - Thus, slowing the Indian economy will have an impact on India's consumer market and infrastructure development.
- India's buoyant iron ore exports, much of which is headed to China, could also see an impact if the twin crises in China triggers an extended slowdown in the Chinese real estate market.
- Slowing Chinese economy can trigger an investment outflow from India. If India can expedite the economic reforms, it can become the next global manufacturing hub.

-Source: Business Standard