

Q → In various ways govt. of India can support the children who lost their parents due to pandemic. Explain.

A → The nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi emphasized that every single child & every single childhood matters. The current circumstances have only magnified its importance as according to NCPCR over 9300 children have lost their parents or were abandoned in COVID 19 pandemic.

Risk associated with orphaned children

- Child labor
- Trafficking
- Juvenile delinquency
- Access to education, health & employments.

So the government of the day has announced multidimensional support mechanisms :-

- financial support by setting a special PM CARES for children which includes a corpus of 10 lakh ^{for} each child.
- ~~Edt~~ Educational assistance by allowing admissions into Sainik school, Navodaya school as well as in private schools for which government will take care of all expenses.
- Orphaned child will be a beneficiary under Ayushman Bharat scheme with a health insurance cover of ₹5 lakh.
- NCPDR launched Bal Swaraj portal to register all the orphaned children during COVID.
- Manodarpan portal for psychological counselling to improve mental health.

Despite these measures, there are certain challenges such as

- Adoption - as most of child care institutions have poor infrastructure & secondly their quantity as a whole is unsatisfactory.
- Coverage of these schemes has been dismal due to structural issues as well as problems imposed by pandemic.

Way forward

- Local government must be strengthened to improve coverage as well as an efficient delivery of these measures
- Skill upgradation of Anganwadi workers to ensure proper nutrition of young children
- Relaxation of adoption norms such as guidelines given by CARA.
- Use of IEC channels for creating awareness about mental health issues among children.