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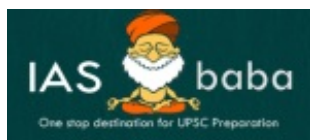
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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (PIB) IAS UPSC – 28th July to 1st August – 2020

Date August 5, 2020

Press Information Bureau (PIB) IAS UPSC –28 th July to 1st August, 2020

Table of Contents

ARCHIVES

GS-2

Cabinet Approves National Education Policy 2020

(Topic: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education, Human Resources)

Did You Know?

- The last NEP was that of 1986 and modified in 1992.
- The current policy is based on the report filed by the committee headed by eminent space scientist K. Kasturirangan.
- NEP 2020 policy envisages 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030

Key Takeaways from NEP 2020

1. **School Education:**
   - **Universalization of education** from preschool to secondary level: The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, will be extended to cover children between 3 and 18 years
   - **Structure**: The current 10+2 system will be divided into **5** (3 to 8 years**)** **+3** (8to 11 years**) + 3 (**11 to 14 years) **+ 4** (14 to 18 years) format**.**
   - **Co-curriculum** and vocational subjects like sports, arts, commerce, science will be treated at the same level.
   - **Computer Skills:** Students will be allowed to take up coding from class 6 onward.
   - **Vocational Education** to start from Class 6 with Internships.
   - **Additional Meal**: Provision of an energy-filled breakfast, in addition to the nutritious mid-day meal, to help children achieve better learning outcomes.
   - **Regular Exams:** To track progress, all students will take school examinations in grades 3, 5, and 8 which will be conducted by the appropriate authority.
   - **Class 10 and 12 board examinations to be made easier,** to test core competencies rather than memorised facts, with all students allowed to **take the exam twice**
   - **Curriculum content will be reduced** in each subject to its core essentials, and will make space for critical thinking and more holistic, inquiry-based, discovery-based, discussion-based, and analysis-based learning
   - **Capabilities:** A new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2021, will be formulated by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in consultation with NCERT
2. **Medium of Instruction:**
   - The policy says that wherever possible, the medium of instruction in schools until at least Class 5, but preferably until Class 8 and beyond, will be the home language or mother tongue or regional language
   - The three languages learned by children will be the choices of states, regions, and of the students, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India

3. **Higher Education**
   - **Gross Enrolment Ratio** in higher education to be raised to 50% by 2035 (presently it is at 26.3%)
   - **Flexibility in Higher Education**: NEP 2020 proposes a multi-disciplinary higher education framework with portable credits, and multiple exits with certificates, diplomas and degrees
   - **The common entrance exam** for all higher education institutes to be held by NTA. The exam will be optional and not mandatory
   - **Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs),** at par with IITs, IIMs, to be set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.
   - **The National Research Foundation** will be created as an apex body for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education
   - **M.Phil** courses will be discontinued and all the courses at undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD level will now be interdisciplinary.
4. **Higher Education Commission of India (HECI)**
   - It will be set up as a **single umbrella body for** the entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education.
   - It will be a single, lean body with four verticals for standards-setting, funding, accreditation and regulation so as to provide "light but tight" oversight
   - **Affiliation of colleges** is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.
5. **Technology & Foreign Institutes**
   - An autonomous body, the **National Educational Technology Forum (NETF),** will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration.
   - National Assessment Centre- **'PARAKH'** has been created to assess the students.
   - It also paves the way for **foreign universities to set up campuses** in India.

What are the merits of new NEP 2020?

Comprehensive: NEP seeks to address the entire gamut of education from preschool to doctoral studies, and from professional degrees to vocational training.

Early Childhood Education: In adopting a 5+3+3+4 model for school education starting at age 3, NEP recognises the primacy of the formative years from ages 3 to 8 in shaping the child's future

Easy on Regulations: NEP 2020 makes a bold prescription to free our schools, colleges and universities from periodic "inspections" and place them on the path of self-assessment and voluntary declaration

Holistic: The policy, inter alia, aims to eliminate problems of pedagogy, structural inequities, access asymmetries and rampant commercialisation.

Promote Inclusion: The Policy proposes creation of 'inclusion funds' to help socially and educationally disadvantaged children pursue education

What are the Challenges ahead w.r.t implementing NEP 2020?

- **Cooperation from States**:
    - Any educational reform can be implemented only with support from the States, and the Centre has the giant task of building a consensus on the many ambitious plans
    - The idea of a National Higher Education Regulatory Council as an apex control organisation is bound to be resented by States
- **Inadequate check on donations:** Fee regulations exist in some States even now, but the regulatory process is unable to rein in profiteering in the form of unaccounted donations.
- **Funding**: Progress on these crucially depends on the will to spend the promised 6% of GDP as public expenditure on education.

Conclusion: If implemented in its true vision, the new structure can bring India at par with the leading countries of the world.

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Zimbabwe on Cooperation in the field of Traditional System of Medicine and Homeopathy

This will provide a frame work for the cooperation between the two countries for the promotion of traditional systems of medicine and homeopathy and will mutually benefit the two countries in the field of Traditional Medicine.

Objective: The main objective of the MoU is to strengthen, promote and develop co-operation in the field of traditional systems of medicine between the two countries on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

1. Promotion in the regulation of teaching, practice, drugs, and drugless therapies within the scope of the MoU
2. Supply of all medicine materials and documents necessary for demonstration and reference in achieving the objectives specified within the framework of the MoU;
3. Exchange of experts for the training of practitioners, paramedics, scientists, teaching professionals and students;

4. Accommodation of interested scientists, practitioners, paramedics and students in Institutions for Research, Educational and Training Programmes;
5. Mutual recognition of Pharmacopoeias and Formularies;
6. Mutual recognition of systems of medicines which are officially recognized by the Parties;
7. Mutual recognition of Educational Qualifications awarded Central/State recognized Universities of the Parties;
8. Provision of Scholarships for education in recognized Institutions;
9. Recognition of traditional preparations on a reciprocal basis by the qualified practitioners as per the existing laws of the respective Countries;
10. Permission to practice on reciprocal basis by the qualified practitioners as per the existing laws of the respective Countries;

GS-3

Tiger Census

(Topic: Conservation)

- India has 70 percent of world's tiger population.
- Jim Corbett national park in Uttarakhand is the largest habitat of the big cats in India (231 tigers).
- Corbett is followed by Nagarhole (127) and Bandipur (126), both in Karnataka.

India's tiger population now stands at 2967 which is 70 percent of the global tiger population. A feather in India's cap was added with the Guinness World Records recognizing the country's efforts as the world largest camera trap survey of wildlife.

With the presence of nearly 30 percent of India's tigers outside tiger reserves, India had embarked upon assessing management interventions through the globally developed Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) framework, which will now be extended to all fifty tiger reserves across the country.

The detailed report of the 4th All India Tiger Estimation is unique in the following ways;

- Abundance index of co-predators and other species has been carried out which hitherto was restricted only to occupancy
- Sex ratio of tigers in all camera trap sites has been carried out for the first time.
- Anthropogenic effects on tiger population have been elaborated in a detailed manner.
- Tiger abundance within pockets in tiger reserves has been demonstrated for the first time.

Note:

- **July 29:** Global Tiger Day
- **Lidar** is a method for measuring distances by illuminating the target with laser light and measuring the reflection with a sensor.

Development of a "No-touch" & "Painless" device for non-invasive screening of bilirubin level in new-borns

(Topic: Technology)

Careful screening of bilirubin level in new-borns is mandatory as per American Academy of Paediatrics (2004), to reduce incidents of a type of brain damage called kernicterus that can result from high levels of bilirubin in a baby's blood. Although invasive capillary collection of blood and the subsequent biochemical test is considered a gold standard for jaundice detection in neonates, transcutaneous bilirubin measurement using non-invasive instruments has obvious added advantages.

The device called "AJO-Neo" is reliable in measuring bilirubin levels in preterm, and term neonates irrespective of gestational or postnatal age, sex, risk factors, feeding behavior or skin color. Detection of neonatal blood bilirubin (Hyperbilirubinemia) faster is extremely important for therapeutic management in order to avoid Kernicterus leading to Neuo-psychiatry problems in neonatal subjects.

Induction of Rafale In Indian Air Force

(Topic: Modernisation efforts in Defence)

The first five Indian Air Force (IAF) Rafale aircraft have arrived at Air Force Station, Ambala. Induction of these next generation aircrafts is a true testimony of Government's commitment of building on India's defence capabilities.

- The Dassault Rafale is a French twin-engine, canard delta wing, multirole fighter aircraft designed and built by Dassault Aviation of France.
- By February 2021, India will receive 18 Rafale jets and by April 2022, India will get all the 36 Rafale.
- Equipped with a wide range of weapons, the Rafale is intended to perform in-depth strike, anti-ship strike and nuclear deterrence missions.

Do you know?

- In September 2016, India and France signed a €7.87 billion **Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA)** for 36 Rafale multi-role fighter jets in fly-away condition following the surprise announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2015.

- The acquisition of the Rafale fighter jets and the S-400 air defence system will go a long way in addressing the depleting squadron strength of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Prelims oriented News

World Hepatitis Day: 28th July

Theme: Keep your Liver Safe in COVID times

- Viral Hepatitis is a very common and serious disease in India, but is virtually unknown to health care providers and the general public. Individuals with viral B & C hepatitis are at increased risk for liver cancer and chronic liver disease, yet an estimated 80 percent of persons with chronic viral hepatitis do not know that they are infected.
- **National Viral Hepatitis Program:** It is the largest program for Hepatitis B and C diagnosis and treatment in the world.

Bye-elections

By-elections are elections conducted to fill elected offices that have become vacant between general elections. This may happen due to

- Resignation
- Death or dismissal of the person holding the office until then

Central Consumer Protection Authority established

Objective: To promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers; will function from Indian Institute of Public Administration premises

- It will be empowered to conduct investigations into violation of consumer rights and institute complaints / prosecution, order recall of unsafe goods and services, order discontinuation of unfair trade practices and misleading advertisements, impose penalties on manufacturers/endorsers/publishers of misleading advertisements.
- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 has come into force from 20th July, 2020. As provided in section 10 of the Act, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has been established w.e.f. 24th July, 2020.

Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana

In order to contribute directly and indirectly to enhancing the income of farmers by providing opportunites to them and to provide employment to youth, start-ups are being encouraged. Under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, new technology in the field of agriculture and allied sectors through start-ups and agripreneurship will be promoted.

- For the year 2020-21, in the first phase, 112 startups in the area of agro processing, food technology and value addition will be funded for a sum of Rs. 1185.90 lakhs which will contribute to enhancing the income of farmers.
- Traditional knowledge of Indian communities should be coupled with technology and skill sets of youth and agriculture graduates to translate the full potential of Indian agriculture in transforming rural areas.
- To boost agriculture and allied activities and give an impetus to the rural economy, the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY) which aims at strengthening infrastructure in agriculture and allied areas, has been revamped.

Launch of Gramodyog Vikas Yojana

The programme aims to enhance the production of 'Agarbatti' in the country and create sustainable employment for the traditional Artisans, by providing them regular employment and increase in their wages. This will give a boost to the domestic Agarbatti Industry in the country and will reduce imports of Agarbatti.

For: the benefit of artisans involved in manufacturing of Agarbatti and to develop village industry under 'Gramodyog Vikas Yojana'

- As per the programme, initially four Pilot Projects will be started, including one in North Eastern part of the country.
- Each targeted cluster of artisans will be supported with about 50 Automatic Agarbatti making machines and 10 Mixing machines.
- Accordingly, a total of 200 Automatic Agarbatti making machines and 40 Mixing machines will be provided to the artisans.

Decisions made till now –

1. Placing the 'Agarbatti' item from "Free" trade to "Restricted" trade in the import policy
2. Enhancing the import duty from 10% to 25% on 'round bamboo sticks' used for manufacturing of Agarbatti

This decision will help to boost the indigenous production of 'Agarbatti'and will pave way to generate rural employment. This will also start the process of mitigating the gap between the indigenous 'production and demand' and will reduce import of 'Agarbatti' in the country.

One Nation One Ration Card scheme

- The One Nation One Ration Card is an ambitious plan and endeavour of DoFPD, to ensure the delivery of food security entitlements to all beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), irrespective of their physical location anywhere in the country, by implementing nation-wide portability of ration cards under the ongoing central sector scheme on 'Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS)' in association with all States/UTs.

- Through this system, the migratory NFSA beneficiaries who frequently change their place of dwelling in search of temporary employments, etc. are now enabled with an option to lift their entitled quota of food grains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) of their choice anywhere in the country by using their same/existing ration card with biometric/Aadhaar based authentication on an electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) device installed at the FPSs.
- It was started in mid-2019 with pilot project in 4 states and was supposed to be rolled-out across country by June 2020

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank that aims to support the building of infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The bank currently has 82 members as well as 20 prospective members from around the world.
- The United Nations has addressed the launch of AIIB as having potential for "scaling up financing for sustainable development" and to improve the global economic governance.
- The bank was proposed by China in 2013 and the initiative was launched at a ceremony in Beijing in October 2014

AIIB 2030-Supporting Asia's Development over the Next Decade – India's expectations

- Introduction of new financing instruments
- Mobilising private sector finance
- Providing financing for social infrastructure to achieve the SDGs 2030
- Integrating development of climate resilient
- Sustainable energy access infrastructure into the recovery response to the COVID-19 crisis
- Establish Regional Presence which would aid in effective project management and implementation

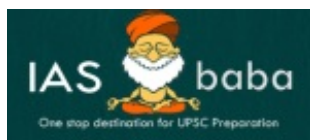## Personality in News

Padma Shri Ren Sonam Tshering Lepcha

- A very respected veteran of nation from field of folk music
- The first among the Lepcha community to feature on All India Radio in 1960.
- Played a major role in the revival of Lepcha culture which is one of the indigenous cultures of Sikkim.
- The frontal icon to encourage Lepcha Community festivals like most popular 'tendong-Lho-Rum-Faat"

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak – 100th Punya Tithi

- Father of Indian Unrest

- Popularly known as Lokmanya, and dedicated his life for the cause of "Purna Swaraj" (complete self-rule)
- One of the founders of the Fergusson College in Pune
- One of the first advocates of Swaraj or self-rule. He gave the slogan, "Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it."
- Along with Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, he was called the 'Lal-Bal-Pal' trio of extremist leaders
- One of the founders of the All India Home Rule League, along with Annie Besant and G S Khaparde, and served as its president and in 1916 he concluded the Lucknow Pact with Mohammed Ali Jinnah, which provided for Hindu-Muslim unity in the nationalist struggle
- **Newspaper:** Kesari in Marathi and Mahratta in English
- In 1893, the Indian freedom fighter **Lokmanya Tilak** praised the celebration of **sarvajanik Ganesha utsav** in his newspaper, **Kesari**, and dedicated his efforts to launch the annual domestic festival into a large, well-organised public event

Qn: Compare and contrast the nationalism of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (PIB) IAS UPSC – 2nd August to 8th August – 2020

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Date August 10, 2020

Press Information Bureau (PIB) IAS UPSC –2nd August to 8th August, 2020

Table of Contents

ARCHIVES

GS-2

Bhoomi Pujan at 'Shree Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir'

(Topic: Judiciary, Secularism)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the first brick of the grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya at 12:44pm, as per the 'muhurat' for 'bhoomi pujan'. He termed August 5 a 'golden day' and added that Ram Janmabhoomi stands 'liberated' today. CM Yogi Adityanath said that the temple construction is a moment to "showcase new India to the world, which does not discriminate on basis of caste and creed".

- Hindus and Muslims claimed ownership over the site for decades. Hindu mobs had demolished a medieval mosque there in 1992, saying it was built on the ruins of a temple for Lord Ram, a revered deity.
- Last year, the top court gave the site to Hindus, ending a decades-long legal battle.

History and Significance of the Ram Temple

1528: Mughal emperor Babar's commander Mir Baqi builds Babri Masjid in Ayodhya.

1858: Puja on premises – An FIR was filed on November 30 by Mohd Salim against a group of Nihang Sikhs who had conducted rituals inside the Babri Masjid. The dispute and riots led to the British building a seven-foot-high wall to separate the places of worships for Hindus and Muslims.

1885: Case for temple – Raghubar Das, who identified himself as mahant at the chabutra in the outer courtyard, filed a suit in the Faizabad civil court against the Secretary of State for India in Council seeking permission to build a makeshift temple

there. The suit was dismissed. Subsequent civil appeals too were dismissed by the District Judge of Faizabad and the court of the Judicial Commissioner. A riot in 1934 led to demolition of a portion of the structure, which the British rebuilt.

1949: Emergence of idols – Abhiram Das, a Hindu priest, claimed he had a recurring dream of Ram making an appearance under the main dome of the Masjid. In the night of December 22 that year, idols were found at the place he had mentioned. While many Hindus believed that it was a miracle, then Faizabad DM K K Nayar on the morning of December 23 informed UP Chief Minister Govind Ballabh Pant about a group of Hindus entering the site and placing the idol. An FIR was filed, the gates to the structure were locked, and the city magistrate attached the property. A long legal battle ensued.

1989: VHP's Shilanyas – Exactly three decades before, on the same day the Supreme Court approved the construction of the Ram Temple at the disputed site, on November 9, 1989, the VHP had put the first stone for the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya.

- The VHP was all set, but the Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court ordered a status quo.
- Determined to defy the court order, VHP collected funds and bricks with Shree Ram written on them, organised kar sevaks and held prayers to go ahead with the Shilanyas.
- Later, as the fervour and communal tension escalated, the Centre and the state governments tried to get the VHP leaders to agree on conducting the Shilanyas outside the disputed site.
- But on November 9, a congregation of VHP leaders, including Sadhus, dug a 7x7x7 ft pit to lay the singhdwar (main entrance) of the sanctum sanctorium, clearly on the disputed land, defying the agreement they had made with the authorities.

1990: L K Advani's Rath Yatra – The most important milestone in the BJP's political journey. BJP leader L.K. Advani launches a Rath Yatra in support of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement from Somnath in Gujarat to Ayodhya.

1992: Babri Masjid demolition on December 6 – Frenzied karsevaks clambered up the domes of the 16th century Babri Masjid and pulled it down, again breaking the assurances given to the Centre and the state governments. The communal violence this sparked across the country left almost 2,000 people dead.

- President's Rule was imposed in several states, dismissing the BJP governments in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh.
- **Liberhan Commission**: The justice M S Liberhan Commission of inquiry was appointed within two weeks of the demolition and was asked to submit a report within three months. The Commission availed 48 extensions and finally submitted its 10,000-page report on January 30, 2009

1994: The Supreme Court, in the historic Ismail Faruqui judgment, says the Babri Masjid was not integral to Islam.

The legal battle is back in April 2002: The matter was back at the courts and yet another legal battle began. A three-judge Bench of the Allahabad High Court was hearing to determine the ownership of the disputed land. The HC ordered the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to excavate the site and determine if it was a temple earlier.

- In 2003, ASI found evidence of the presence of a temple under the mosque. This re-energized the VHP, and its chief Ashok Singhal asked the then-BJP government to make a legislation to hand over the site to the Hindus so that the construction of the temple could begin.
- In September 2010, the High Court, which took the ASI's findings along with other evidence before it into consideration, ruled that the disputed land should be divided into three parts — a third should go to Ram Lalla Virajman, represented by the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha; one-third to the Sunni Waqf Board; and the remaining to the Nirmohi Akhara.
- In December, the parties moved Supreme Court. Neither the VHP-BJP nor the Muslims was happy with the order. In May 2011, the apex court stayed the High Court order.
- Meanwhile, the VHP continued its campaign with vigour. But the BJP's coming to power and its silence over the temple as well as the RSS leaderhsip's advice not to escalate pressure over the Ram Temple forced them to lie low.
- Towards the end of 2018, the VHP again raised its pitch, with hundreds of thousands of Hindu seers and followers assembling in Ayodhya but BJP's senior leaders convinced them that the government had to wait for the Supreme Court verdict.

On November 9, 2019: A five-judge Supreme Court bench led by then Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi ruled in favour of Ram Lalla, and said the entire disputed land spread over 2.7 acres will be handed over to a trust formed by the government, which will monitor the construction of the Ram Temple at the site.

February 5, 2020: The Union Cabinet approved the setting up of the Trust, with the Prime Minister making the announcement in the Lok Sabha.

- The Trust, named Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Tirtha Kshetra, is to take decisions independently on the construction of the Ram temple and related issues.
- It has been handed over the whole 67.703 acres acquired to maintain the sanctity of Ayodhya and for the construction of the temple, keeping in mind the needs of crores of devotees.

Update on Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan

The Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (GKRA), launched to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for migrant workers returning to villages and similarly affected citizens in rural areas, in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak, is now empowering villagers with livelihood opportunities in 116 districts of six states.

The Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan is taking action on mission mode to provide employment to migrant workers who have returned to their native villages of these 6 states namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

- A total of about 17 crore mandays employment has been provided and Rs.13,240 crore has been spent so far in the of pursuit of objectives of the Abhiyaan.
- A large number of structures have been created under GKRA so far including 62,532 water conservation structures, 1.74 lakh rural houses, 14,872 cattle shed, 8,963 form ponds, 2,222 Community Sanitary Complex
- 5,909 works have been taken up through District Mineral Funds
- 564 Gram Panchayat have been provided internet connectivity
- 16,124 candidates have been provided skill training through Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)

Jal Jeevan Mission: A reservoir of clean water & employment opportunities

(Topic: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation)

- In August, 2019, Government of India launched Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).
- JJM aims at providing potable water at service level of 55 litre per capita per day (lpcd) to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) by 2024.
- The fund sharing pattern between the Centre and states is 90:10 for Himalayan and North-Eastern States, 50:50 for other states, and 100% for Union Territories.

Do you know?

Every village will prepare a Village Action Plan (VAP) which will have three components:

- Water source and its maintenance
- Water supply and
- Grey-water (domestic wastewater) management

Launches new version of India Water Resources Information System (India-WRIS): This portal contains information related to Water Resources through dashboards for rainfall, water levels & discharge of rivers, water bodies, ground water levels, reservoir storages, evapotranspiration and soil moisture, as well as modules on water resources projects, water bodies, hydro-met data availability and tools for GIS layer editing.

- Water information easily made available to users and general public, for decision makers, water managers, farmers & experts
- Direct access to hydro-met information from Central and State agencies
- Real-time data available with one click
- Variety of modules for different needs
- Latest technologies, continuous development and improvement

Draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020

(Topic: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation)

Aim: To provide impetus to self-reliance in defence manufacturing, and to position India amongst the leading countries of the world in defence and aerospace sectors

The DPEPP 2020 is envisaged as overarching guiding document of MoD to provide a focused, structured and significant thrust to defence production capabilities of the country for self-reliance and exports.

Goals and objectives:

1. To achieve a turnover of Rs 1,75,000 Crores (US$ 25Bn) including export of Rs 35,000 Crore (US$ 5 Billion) in Aerospace and Defence goods and services by 2025.
2. To develop a dynamic, robust and competitive Defence industry, including Aerospace and Naval Shipbuilding industry to cater to the needs of Armed forces with quality products.
3. To reduce dependence on imports and take forward "Make in India" initiatives through domestic design and development.
4. To promote export of defence products and become part of the global defence value chains.
5. To create an environment that encourages R&D, rewards innovation, creates Indian IP ownership and promotes a robust and self-reliant defence industry.

The Policy brings out multiple strategies under the following focus areas:

1. Procurement Reforms
2. Indigenization & Support to MSMEs/Startups
3. Optimize Resource Allocation

4. Investment Promotion, FDI & Ease of Doing Business
5. Innovation and R&D
6. DPSUs and OFB
7. Quality Assurance & Testing Infrastructure
8. Export Promotion

GS-3

Initiatives for Agricultural Mechanization

(Topic: Agriculture)

Agricultural Mechanization is one of the key drivers for sustainable development of agriculture sector which helps in increasing production by timely farm operations, reducing losses, reducing the cost of operations by ensuring better management of costly inputs. Mechanization also enhances the productivity of natural resources and reduces drudgery associated with various farm operations.

Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM): In order to lay special emphasis towards promotion of agricultural mechanization in the country and to bring more inclusiveness, Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) had been initiated since 2014.

Crop Residue Burning: Paddy straw burning is currently practiced on a large scale in Punjab & Haryana to clear the fields for Rabi Crop sowing because the time window available between the harvesting of paddy crop and the sowing of next crops is very short (2-3 weeks). With an objective to wean away farmers of this region from Crop Residue Burning, the scheme of CRM (Crop Residue Management) was initiated since 2018 by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, wherein, farmers are provided machinery for in-situ management of crop residue through establishment of CHCs (Custom Hiring Centres). Individual farmers are also provided subsidy for procurement of machinery.

Multi lingual Mobile App "CHC- Farm Machinery" which connects the farmers with Custom Hiring Service Centers situated in their locality. This app is facilitating agricultural mechanization in the country by encouraging small & marginal farmers to take machines on rental basis for agriculture practices without them having to purchase the high priced such machines. The App has been further modified and now has been given the acronym of "FARMS-app" (Farm Machinery Solutions-app).

During COVID-19 padndemic

- Farming Operations by Farmers and Farm Workers in the field would continue during lock-down.

- Operations of Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs) related to Farm Machinery were relaxed.
- Shops of Agricultural machinery and its spare Parts (Including Supply Chain) and repairs to remain open.
- Seamless, intra and inter State movement of harvesting and sowing related machines like combine harvesters and other agriculture/horticulture implements was ensured.
- Under the Government subsidy programmes, agricultural manufactures were exempted from essential testing related activities like, random selection of test samples, subsequent batch testing after the expiry validity of test reports, updating of CMVR, COP &Type approval applicable to Tractors, Power Tillers, Combine Harvesters and other self-propelled agricultural machinery till 31.12.2020. Testing of tractors as per revised BIS Standard IS 12207-2019 and Implementation of new technical critical specifications of 51 agricultural machineries has also been deferred till 31.12.2020.
- Due to lock-down, closing out of borders and quarantine measures, disrupted the cross border movements of Agricultural machines like combine Harvesters & other agricultural machines across Districts & States. The timely intervention of the M&T Division of the Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Ministry and coordination with the State Nodal officers of Agricultural machineries, District Administration and Agricultural Machinery Manufacturers ensured the free movement of Agricultural machines across the borders.

Explosion in Beirut city, Lebanon

(Topic: Lessons from Global Disaster)

The disaster was preceded by a large fire at the Port of Beirut, on the city's northern Mediterranean coast.

- At least 100 people were killed and nearly 4,000 injured in a massive explosion at Lebanon's capital Beirut.
- The explosion was of over 2700 tonnes of ammonium nitrate stored for six years in a warehouse in the port.
- As many as 300,000 people had been made temporarily homeless and that collective losses might reach $10-15bn (£8-11bn).

Do you know?

- Incident comes at one of the worst times for the country.
- The Western Asian country in the recent past has been crippled by serious economic crisis.
- It had led to large-scale closure of businesses and soaring prices of basic commodities resulting in social unrest.
- The country is also grappled by age-old Shia-Sunni rift.

What is ammonium nitrate and how dangerous is it?

Ammonium nitrate is a crystal-like white solid commonly used as a source of nitrogen for agricultural fertiliser. But it can also be combined with fuel oils to create an explosive used in the mining and construction industries. Militants have made bombs with it in the past.

Experts say that ammonium nitrate is relatively safe when stored properly. However, if you have a large amount of material lying around for a long time it begins to decay. The real problem is that over time it will absorb little bits of moisture and it eventually turns into an enormous rock. This makes it more dangerous because if a fire reaches it, the chemical reaction will be much more intense.

What caused the mushroom cloud?

- Videos from Beirut showed smoke billowing from a fire, and then a mushroom cloud following the blast.
- You have a supersonic shockwave that is travelling through the air, and you can see that in the white spherical cloud which travels out from the centre, expanding upwards.
- The shockwave is produced from compressed air. The air expands rapidly and cools suddenly and the water condenses, which causes the cloud.

Ammonium nitrate has been associated with deadly industrial accidents.

- In 1921, about 4,500 tonnes of ammonium nitrate caused an explosion at a plant in Oppau, Germany, killing more than 500 people
- The deadliest industrial accident in US history occurred in 1947 at Galveston Bay, Texas. At least 581 people were killed when more than 2,000 tonnes of the chemical detonated on-board a ship which had docked in the port
- More recently, an explosion involving ammonium nitrate and other chemicals killed 173 people in the port of Tianjin northern China in 2015.

Source: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-53668493

INST scientists develop simple economical nonsurgical prevention of cataract

(Topic: Technology)

Cataract a major form of blindness that occurs when the structure of crystallin proteins that make up the lens in our eyes deteriorates, causing damaged or disorganised proteins to aggregate and form a milky blue or brown layer, which ultimately affects lens transparency. Thus, prevention of the formation of these aggregates as well as their destruction in the early stage of disease progression is a major treatment strategy for cataracts, and materials that can carry out this task could make cataract prevention affordable and accessible.

A team of scientists from the Institute of Nano Science & Technology (INST) has developed nanorods from the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) Aspirin, a popular medication used to reduce pain, fever, or inflammation and found it to be an effective non−invasive small molecule-based nanotherapeutics against cataract.

- Used the anti-aggregation ability of self-build aspirin nanorods as an effective non−invasive small molecule-based nanotherapeutics against cataract
- Aspirin nanorods prevent the aggregation of crystallin protein and various peptides derived from its fragmentation, which play a crucial role in cataract formation.
- They prevent the protein/peptide aggregation through biomolecular interactions, which convert beta-turn like the structure of the crystallin peptides, responsible for amyloid formation into coils and helices, those fail to aggregate.

- These were found to prevent cataract formation by inhibiting aggregation of crystallin, and crystallin derived peptide aggregates.
- As with aging and under various conditions, the lens protein crystallin aggregates to form opaque structures in the eye lens, which impairs vision and cause cataract.

Equipment-free, a simple paper-strip based naked-eye fluoride ion detection and quantification kit in drinking water to evade Fluorosis-based disorders

Fluorosis is a crippling disease resulting from deposition of fluorides in the hard and soft tissues of body due to excess intake of fluoride through drinking water/food products/industrial pollutants over a long period. It results in dental fluorosis, skeletal fluorosis, and non-skeletal fluorosis. Easy detection of fluorides in water can help preventing the public health hazards.

Technology has been developed – an equipment-free fluoride ion detection and quantification in drinking water with the naked-eye. It can be operated by non-experts for household use to evade Fluorosis-based disorders.

Prelims oriented News

Thenzawl Golf Resort: Implemented in Mizoram under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme

National Handloom Day: 7th August

Launch of BHARAT AIR FIBER: Introduced by BSNL as part of digital India initiates by the Government of India

> Aims to provide Wireless Connectivity in the range of 20 KMs from the BSNL Locations and thus customers at remote places also will be benefitted as BSNL comes with cheapest services with support of Telecom Infrastructure Partners (TIPs).

PM SVANidhi Scheme

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs recently launched a Special Micro-Credit Facility Scheme for providing affordable loans to street vendors.
- The scheme is PM SVANidhi – PM Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi.

Key takeaways

- The vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000.
- It will be repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year.
- On timely/early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy at 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer on six monthly basis.
- There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan.

- Over 50 lakh people, including vendors, hawkers, thelewalas, etc. are likely to benefit from this scheme.
- Street vendors from peri- urban/ rural areas have become beneficiaries of an urban livelihood programme for the first time.
- MFIs/ NBFCs/ SHG Banks have been allowed in a scheme for the urban poor due to their ground level presence for the first time.

IBBI amends the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016

About Insolvency & Bankruptcy

- Insolvency is the situation where the debtor is not in a position to pay back the creditor.
- For a corporate firm, the signs of this could be a slow-down in sales, missing of payment deadlines etc.
- Bankruptcy is the legal declaration of Insolvency.

Amendment

- The Regulations require the committee of creditors to fix the fee payable to the liquidator.
- Where the fee has not been fixed by the committee of creditors, the Regulations provide for a fee as a percentage of the amount realised and of the amount distributed by the liquidator.
- There have been instances where a liquidator realises the amount while another liquidator distributes the same to stakeholders.
- The amendment made to the Regulations today clarifies that where a liquidator realises any amount, but does not distribute the same, he shall be entitled to a fee corresponding to the amount realised by him.
- Likewise, where a liquidator distributes any amount, which is not realised by him, he shall be entitled to a fee corresponding to the amount distributed by him.

Making India Aatmanirbhar in Agarbatti Production: Khadi Agarbatti Aatmanirbhar Mission

- Aims at creating employment for unemployed and migrant workers in different parts of the country while increasing domestic Agarbatti production substantially
- The scheme designed by KVIC on PPP mode is unique in the sense that in a very less investment, it will create sustainable employment and help private Agarbatti manufacturers to scale up Agarbatti production without any capital investment by them.
- Under the scheme, KVIC will provide Automatic Agarbatti making machines and powder mixing machines to the artisans through the successful private Agarbatti manufacturers who will sign the agreement as business partners.

- KVIC has decided to procure only locally made machines by Indian manufacturers which also aims at encouraging local production.
- The current job work rate for Agarbatti making is Rs 15 per kg. At this rate, 4 artisans working on one Automatic Agarbatti machine will earn minimum Rs 1200 per day by making 80 kg of Agarbatti. Hence every artisan will earn at least Rs 300 per day. Similarly, on powder mixing machine, each artisan will get a fixed amount of Rs 250 per day.
- As per the scheme, the wages to the artisans will be provided by the business partners on weekly basis directly in their accounts through DBT only. Supply of raw material to the artisans, logistics, quality control and marketing of the final product will be the sole responsibility of the business partner.

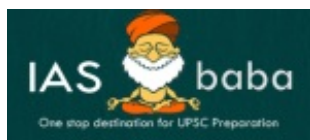## Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN)

- The Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN) is an innovative technological solution aimed at strengthening immunization supply chain systems across the country.
- This is being implemented under National Health Mission (NHM) by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- eVIN aims to provide real-time information on vaccine stocks and flows, and storage temperatures across all cold chain points in the country.
- This robust system has been used with the requisite customization during the COVID pandemic for ensuring continuation of the essential immunization services and protecting our children and pregnant mothers against vaccine preventable diseases.
- eVIN combines state-of-the-art technology, a strong IT infrastructure and trained human resource to enable real time monitoring of stock and storage temperature of the vaccines kept in multiple locations across the country.
- The Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network has helped create a big data architecture that generates actionable analytics encouraging data-driven decision-making and consumption based planning that helps in maintaining optimum stocks of vaccines leading to cost savings. Vaccine availability at all times has increased to 99% in most health centers.

Theatre legend Ebrahim Alkazi

- Alkazi, credited for revolutionising theatre in India by combining native folk traditions and international acting techniques, became one of the most prominent theatre artistes in Mumbai during the 1940s and 1950s
- Served as the director of National School of Drama (NSD) from 1962 to 1977 — the longest tenure ever in the history of the institute.
- Alkazi evolved new training methodologies for student actors, directors and stage designers and spoke of new ethics and philosophy in theatre.
- As director of National School of Drama, he shaped the course for modern Indian theatre, establishing links between traditional vocabulary and modern idiom.

- In Bombay, Alkazi did powerful renditions of Greek tragedies, Shakespeare, Henrik Ibsen, Chekov and August Strindberg.
- He directed over 50 plays, including famous productions such as Girish Karnad's Tughlaq, Mohan Rakesh's Ashadh Ka Ek Din, Dharamvir Bharati's Andha Yug and numerous Shakespearean and Greek plays. He mentored generations of actors, including Naseeruddin Shah and Om Puri.
- At 50, Alkazi quit the NSD and theatre and set up the gallery Art Heritage with his wife in New Delhi, and built his collection of art, photographs and books.
- He was conferred with honours such as the Kalidas Award, the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan for his immense contributions to the Indian stage.

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (PIB) IAS UPSC – 9th August to 16th August – 2020

Date August 19, 2020

Press Information Bureau (PIB) IAS UPSC –9th August to 16th August, 2020

Table of Contents

ARCHIVES

GS-1

78th anniversary of 'Quit India Movement'

(Topic: Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues; The Freedom Struggle – its various stages and important contributors /contributions from different parts of the country)

India's fight against British rule is often seen as a long drawn battle developing since early 20th century, especially under the leadership of Gandhiji. At various phases, the movement saw itself gaining higher momentum, for instance the non-cooperation in 1920-22 and civil disobedience movement in 1930-32. However, the one call that moved India towards its ultimate freedom call was the rebel cry of the congress between early August 1942 and September 1944.

In July 1942, the Congress Working Committee met at Wardha and a resolution was passed which was termed The Wardha Resolution. It is also known as Quit India Resolution which demanded, "The British Rule in India must end immediately." And it declared that free India "will assure the success by throwing his great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of Nazism, Facism and perialism". Thus, Quit India was about enabling India's greater participation in the war for peace and in the war of liberation from fascism and nascism. Quit India was a civil disobedience movement launched at the Bombay session of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) by Mahatma Gandhi on August 8, 1942, demanding an end to British rule in India. While message of quit India was loud and clear, the call of 'do or die' infused the masses with a life of its own.

Quit India is also called as India August Movement (August Kranti), People's

Movement and Leaderless movement.

Circumstances for the launch of the movement:

1. Failure of Cripps mission: Cripps mission was sent from Britain to negotiate with Indian leaders to support Britain in WW-2. Indian National congress has declared Purna Swaraj as final goal in Lahore session in 1928 and was not ready to concede on this. While British government was promising only dominion that too after war.
2. Escalation of Prices and food shortage: WW-2 has increase demand of goods which lead to escalation of prices. Food and other good were supplied to soldiers from India and common people have bear it repercussion in form of high prices. Public was more ready for mass based movement than our leaders.
3. Advancement of Japan: Japan was advancing toward India after subjugating South East Asia. Indian saw it as opportunities to over-throw the British.
4. The British saw the threat it posed and arrested all the major national leaders before the dawn of the day, the whole movement was carried out by the masses without the leaders.

Impact of the movement:

1. QIM demoralized British government to rule India. People participated without any guides and attacked the symbols of British authority. In many places self-rule local governments were established. This pressurized British government to accept demands of congress. So, the British lifted Ban on Congress and National leaders were released from prison.
2. Paved the way for constitutional proposal of the Cabinet Mission. Latter Constituent assembly was organized on the Mission's recommendations.
3. Relent on INA Trails: The British were in favor to punish every participant on treason charges but due to QIM has forced the British to be relent on trial.

Knit India movement: Lack of sense of belonging to each other and unity of purpose and action had led to long subjugation and exploitation of India. Learning from this, all Indians need to be bound by the shared sense of Indianness while pursuing their respective cultural values and ethos. This is all about nourishing the spirit of nationalism. A perception of divided India would make us an easy target for others for fishing in troubled waters. A strong, unified and emotionally integrated India is the best defence against those casting an evil eye on us with questionable intentions. Therefore, there is a need to **Knit India** into one single fabric by ensuring equality of all and equal opportunities for all and noted that a divided and iniquitous society does not enable the fullest development of all Indians to their capacity.

Setting up of Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums

(Topic: The Freedom Struggle – its various stages and important contributors /contributions from different parts of the country)

Ministry of Tribal Affairs is developing "Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums" dedicated to the contributions of the Tribal people in India to the freedom struggle

- All the museums will have strong usage of technologies like Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), 3D/7D holographic projections etc.
- These museums will trace the history along the trails, along which the tribal people in hills and forests fought for their right to live and will, therefore, combine ex situ display with in situ conservation, regeneration initiatives.
- These will be museums, objects as well as ideas. These will demonstrate the way tribal struggles for protecting their custodial concerns for the biological and cultural diversity of the country, have helped in nation building.

History of freedom fighters in India has recorded scores of instances of unequal battles that became inevitable when imperialist forces came out with their quest for acquiring territories through the use of brute force, destroying the sovereignty and freedom of free people and bringing in the process a holocaust to the lives of innumerable men, women and children. It is a battle between the evil designs of expansionism and the powerful instinct of self-presentation.

Tribals have resisted the British authority and other exploiters. For many centuries, tribals were isolated, scattered in forests. Each tribe has established its own socio cultural diversity. They launched movements against the British authority in their respective regions. Their agitations against the outsiders could be called anti-colonial. They revolted against them because of their exploitation in the form of encroachment on their land, eviction from their land, annulment of the traditional legal and social rights and customs, against enhancement of rent, for transfer of land to thetiller, abolition of feudal and semi-feudal form of ownership.

On the whole, these movements had social and religious overtone. But they were directed against the issues related to their existence. Tribal Resistance Movement was an integral part of Freedom movement of India. In this historic struggle, the heroic role played by many distinguished tribal leaders like BirsaMunda, Rani Gaidinliu, LaxmanNaik, and Veer SurendraSai and many others.

The most dominant characteristic of the tribal resistance movement was that it was essentially an uprising against the foreign rulers and in that sense could be constructed to be the precursor of the national liberation movement which took a definite shape and gathered momentum under the inspiring leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. It is immaterial as to what were the compulsions or motivations behind this resistance movement; it is immaterial if the tribal revolutionaries had no formal education and training in staging armed rebellions and had no common leadership to guide and spur them to action. The unmistakable fact remains that they could no longer meekly submit

to the intervention of the foreign rulers in their habitat, age old customs, rituals and cultural moors. They acted as the stooges of the imperial power and all their action and conduct were directed at uprooting the foundations of the foreign rule.

GS-2

Launch of the platform – Transparent Taxation – Honoring the Honest

(Topic: Government policies and interventions)

In news:

- "Transparent Taxation — Honouring the Honest" platform was launched recently.
- The platform provides faceless assessment, faceless appeal and a taxpayers' charter.

Faceless Assessment:

- Under faceless assessment, the scrutiny of returns of a taxpayer will be done by a tax officer selected at random and not necessarily from the same jurisdiction.
- This will do away the need for any face-to-face contact between the taxpayer and tax official, thereby reducing the chances of coercion and rent-seeking.
- The move is expected to ease the compliance burden for assessees and reward the "honest taxpayer", who plays a big role in nation-building.
- A faceless tax system would give the taxpayer confidence on fairness and fearlessness.
- It helps to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of income taxpayers.
- The assessment system seeks to eliminate corrupt practices by doing away with the territorial jurisdiction of income-tax offices.

Faceless appeal facility:

This facility would be available to all citizens from September 25 (Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's birth anniversary)

A faceless appeal system would allow the taxpayer to appeal against a tax official's decision without the need of making a physical representation.

Taxpayers' charter

- The taxpayers' charter was announced in the Union Budget for fiscal year 2020-21 by the Finance Minister.
- The charter outlines the rights and duties of an honest taxpayer.
- It also defines the commitment of the tax department and the expectations from the taxpayers.

- It is a step towards bringing together rights and duties of the taxpayer and fixing the government's responsibilities towards the taxpayer

Do you know?

- All these above reforms are likely to empower citizens by ensuring time-bound services by the Income Tax Department.
- PM appealed to those not paying taxes, despite having the ability, to come forward and commit themselves to the cause of making the country self-reliant.

GS-3

Launch of financing facility of Rs. 1 Lakh Crore under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund

(Topic: Agriculture)

The scheme will support farmers, PACS, FPOs, Agri-entrepreneurs, etc. in building community farming assets and post-harvest agriculture infrastructure. These assets will enable farmers to get greater value for their produce as they will be able to store and sell at higher prices, reduce wastage, and increase processing and value addition.

India has a huge opportunity to invest in post-harvest management solutions like warehousing, cold chain, and food processing, and build a global presence in areas such as organic and fortified foods.

This scheme provides a good opportunity for start-ups in agriculture to avail the benefits and scale their operations, thereby creating an ecosystem that reaches farmers in every corner of the country.

Agriculture Infrastructure Fund

The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund is a medium – long term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through interest subvention and credit guarantee.

- The duration of the scheme shall be from FY2020 to FY2029 (10 years).
- Under the scheme, Rs. 1 Lakh Crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans with interest subvention of 3% per annum and credit guarantee coverage under CGTMSE scheme for loans up to Rs. 2 Crore.
- The beneficiaries will include farmers, PACS, Marketing Cooperative Societies, FPOs, SHGs, Joint Liability Groups (JLG), Multipurpose Cooperative Societies, Agri-entrepreneurs, Startups, and Central/State agency or Local Body sponsored Public-Private Partnership Projects.

PM-KISAN

The PM-KISAN scheme was launched in December 2018 to provide income support by way of a cash benefit to all landholding farmers (subject to certain exclusion criteria) to enable them to fulfill their agricultural requirements and support their families.

> Under the scheme, the financial benefit of Rs.6000/- per year is provided to eligible beneficiary farmers in three equal installments.

Organic Farming in India

(Topic: Agriculture)

The growth story of organic farming is unfolding with increasing demand not only in India but also globally. In a world battered by the COVID pandemic, the demand for healthy and safe food is already showing an upward trend and hence this is an opportune moment to be captured for a win-win situation for our farmers, consumers and the environment.

- India ranks first in number of organic farmers and ninth in terms of area under organic farming.
- Sikkim became the first State in the world to become fully organic and other States including Tripura and Uttarakhand have set similar targets.
- North East India has traditionally been organic and the consumption of chemicals is far less than rest of the country. Similarly the tribal and island territories are being nurtured to continue their organic story.

With the aim of assisting farmers to adopt organic farming and improve remunerations due to premium prices, two dedicated programs namely Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD) and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) were launched in 2015 to encourage chemical free farming.

- The major organic exports from India have been flax seeds, sesame, soybean, tea, medicinal plants, rice and pulses, which were instrumental in driving an increase of nearly 50% in organic exports in 2018-19, touching Rs 5151 crore.
- Modest commencement of exports from Assam, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland to UK, USA, Swaziland and Italy have proved the potential by increasing volumes and expanding to new destinations as the demand for health foods increases.
- Certification is an important element of organic produce to instill customer confidence. Both PKVY and MOVCD are promoting certification under Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) and National Program for Organic Production (NPOP) respectively targeting domestic and exports markets.
- The concept of market led One district – One product is being encouraged, as also development of more clusters in the vicinity of bigger towns where the appetite for organics will be much more.

Natural farming is not a new concept in India, with farmers having tilled their land without the use of chemicals – largely relying on organic residues, cow dung, composts, etc since time immemorial. The philosophy underlying organic farming of integration of the elements – soil, water, microbes and 'waste' products, forestry and agriculture is the correct recipe for sustainable use of natural resources, which are coming under severe stress due to ever increasing requirement of food and feedstock for agri based industry. This is also in sync with the Sustainable Development **Goal 2** targeting 'end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture'.

World Biofuel day: 10th August

(Topic: Energy)

- **Theme:** Biofuels towards Atmanirbhar Bharat
- To create awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels and to highlight the various efforts made by the Government in the Biofuel sector
- This day also honors the research experiments by Sir Rudolf Diesel who ran an engine with peanut oil in the year 1893. His research experiment had predicted that vegetable oil is going to replace fossil fuels in the next century to fuel different mechanical engines.
- Three major areas- Ethanol, Bio-diesel and Biogas
- Benefits:
    - Reduction on import dependence
    - Ensuring a cleaner environment
    - Generating additional income for farmers
    - Employment generation
- Since, 2014, the Government of India has taken a number of initiatives to increase blending of biofuel:
    - Administrative price mechanism for ethanol
    - Simplifying the procurement procedures by OMCs
    - Amending the provisions of Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951
    - Long term ethanol procurement policy
    - Ethanol distillation capacity addition
    - Enabling lignocellulosic route for ethanol procurement
- Under the Ethanol Blending Program, OMCs have procured 113.09 Crore litres of Biodiesel from 01.12.19 to 03.08.20.
- Under the Biodiesel blending Program, OMCs have increased biodiesel procurement from 1.1 crore litres during 2015-16 to 10.6 crore litres during 2019-20.

Capturing the voice of the unreached in Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP)-2020

(Topic: Technology)

For the first time, India is recording the voice of the voiceless through community radio for the formulation of a science and technology policy.

The process of formulation of Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP)-2020 has been initiated by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), focusing on decentralization of policy design by making it a bottom-up and inclusive process.

This policy aims to realign priorities of the STI ecosystem as per the need of diverse scientific sectors, and the people-centric approach thus would align it with the changing aspirations of society for holistic socio-economic development of the nation. A participatory model with four interconnected tracks has been adopted to formulate this policy to capture the fundamental ethos of participatory democracy.

The policy formulation process, based on four interlinked tracks covering cover nearly 15,000 stakeholders, also involves inclusion of inputs through community radio. Accordingly, National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC), DST, has devised a unique way to capture the inputs of people for S&T through involvement of Community Radio Stations (CRS).

Himalayan Geothermal Springs release huge amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere

(Topic: Environment)

Carbon outflux from Earth's interior to the exosphere through volcanic eruptions, fault zones, and geothermal systems contribute to the global carbon cycle that effects short and long term climate of the Earth. Himalaya hosts about 600 geothermal springs having varied temperature and chemical conditions. Their role in regional and global climate, as well as the process of tectonic driven gas emission, needs to be considered while estimating emissions to the carbon cycle and thereby to global warming.

- The Himalayan geothermal springs which cover about 10,000 square km in the Garhwal region of Himalaya, show a significant discharge of Carbon dioxide(CO_2) rich water.
- CO_2 in these thermal springs are sourced from metamorphic decarbonation of carbonate rocks present deep in the Himalayan core along with magmatism and oxidation of graphite.
- Most of the geothermal water is dominated by evaporation followed by weathering of silicate rocks. Isotopic analyses further point towards a meteoric source for geothermal water.

Launch of Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO)

(Topic: Space)

The NIIO puts in place dedicated structures for the end users to interact with academia and industry towards fostering innovation and indigenisation for self-reliance in defence in keeping with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The NIIO is a three-tiered organisation.

- **Naval Technology Acceleration Council (N-TAC)** will bring together the twin aspects of innovation and indigenisation and **provide apex level directives**.
- A working group under the N-TAC will implement the projects.
- A **Technology Development Acceleration Cell (TDAC)** has also been created for induction of emerging disruptive technology in an accelerated time frame.

The Draft Defence Acquisition Policy 2020 (DAP 20) envisages Service Headquarters establishing an Innovation & Indigenisation Organisation within existing resources. **Indian Navy already has a functional Directorate of Indigenisation (DoI)** and the new structures created will build upon the ongoing indigenisation initiatives, as well as focus on innovation.

During the launch event, the Indian Navy signed **Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)** with:-

1. Uttar Pradesh Expressway Industrial Development Authority (**UPEIDA**);
2. Raksha Shakti University (**RSU**), Gujarat;
3. Maker Village, Kochi; and
4. Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (**SIDM**).

Prelims-oriented News

12th August: International Youth Day

The Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG) App: An EPFO member can raise claim, track claim and know the status of claim raised.

Krishi Megh: National Agricultural Research & Education System -Cloud Infrastructure and Services

- The Government of India-World Bank funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project is designed for strengthening the national agricultural education system in the country with the overall objective to provide more relevant and high-quality education to the agricultural university students that is in tune with the New Education Policy – 2020.
- There is a need to save and preserve the important research-based data in a prompt digitized form to enable its access anywhere in any corner of the country and the world.
- Krishi Megh is a step forward towards digital agriculture of New India.

ISRO pays tribute to Dr Vikram Sarabhai by announcing that Chandrayaan 2 Orbiter has captured the Moon images of "Sarabhai" Crater

Dr Vikram Sarabhai: Father of India's Space Programme, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)

- "Sarabhai" Crater is named after Dr Vikram Sarabhai and around 250 to 300 kilometres east of this Crater is where the Apollo 17 and Luna 21 Missions had landed.
- As per the ISRO sources, the Sarabhai Crater captured in 3D images shows that the Crater has a depth of around 1.7 Kms taken from its raised rim and the slope of Crater walls is in between 25 to 35 degree. These findings will help the Space Scientists to understand further the process on the lunar region filled with lava.

First Silk Training cum Production Center in Arunachal Pradesh by KVIC: In the far-flung tribal village of Chullyu,

- For the Eri Silk, which is traditionally worn by local tribals
- KVIC also aims to connect the center with the tourists visiting Ziro tourist spot and thus providing an assured market to the local artisans for their products.
- The production center will be equipped to cater to the market demand. For the initial period, KVIC will also provide raw material and expenditure on training and wages and the cost of developing the prototypes of new designs.

World Elephant Day: 12th August

- To create awareness on elephant conservation, and to share knowledge and positive solutions for the better protection and management of wild and captive elephants.
- Asian elephants are listed as "Endangered" on the IUCN Red List of threatened species. This has been done most of the range states except India, have lost their viable elephant populations due to loss of habitats & poaching etc.
- The current population estimates indicate that there are about 50,000 -60000 Asian elephants in the world. More than 60 % of the population is held in India.

- Indian Elephant has also been listed in the Appendix I of the Convention of the Migratory species in the recently concluded Conference of Parties of CMS 13 at Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat in February 2020.
- Elephant is the Natural Heritage Animal of India and India also celebrates this day to spread awareness towards conservation of the species.

eSanjeevani: A tele-medicine platform; This has made it convenient for the people to avail of the health services without having to travel. It also ensures that the patient gets to see the doctor in around five minutes after logging in.

- 1.5 lakh tele-consultations completed through 'eSanjeevani' and 'eSanjeevaniOPD'
- This eSanjeevani platform has enabled two types of telemedicine services viz. Doctor-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani) and Patient-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani OPD) Tele-consultations.
- The former is being implemented under the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre (AB-HWCs) programme.
- It is planned to implement tele-consultation in all the 1.5 lakh Health and Wellness Centres (as spokes) in a 'Hub and Spoke' model, by December 2022.

Launch of the submarine cable connectivity to Andaman & Nicobar Islands (CANI)

- The submarine Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) connects Andaman & Nicobar Islands (laying of the 2300 Kms submarine cable)
- The challenges: surveying in the deep sea, maintaining the quality of the cable and laying of the cable with specialised vessels, high waves, storms and monsoons and the tough times owing to Corona Pandemic.
- The Submarine Cable will help A&N in getting cheaper & better connectivity and all the benefits of Digital India, especially in improving online education, tele-medicine, banking system, online trading and in boosting tourism
- Under the Act-East policy, the role of Andaman and Nicobar in India's strong relations with East Asian countries and other countries connected to the sea is very high and is going to increase.
- The speedy construction of the deep draft inner harbor and the proposal to construct TransShipment Port in Great Nicobar at an estimated cost of about Rs 10 thousand crores would enable big ships to anchor and would increase India's share in maritime trade, along with new employment opportunities.
- The blue economy like Fisheries, Aquaculture and SeaWeed farming in the island will accelerate in commensurate with the modern infrastructure being developed in Andaman and Nicobar.

Launch of Minimum Standards of Architectural Education Regulations, 2020

- The ancient cities, monuments, temples, buildings, etc are all Testament of Rich Indian Cultural Heritage and Awe-inspiring Architecture. Architecture of Modern India has the potential to compete with the very best in the world.
- Shri Dhotre hoped that the student-centric approach of these Regulations shall equip the students to learn and develop their skills in a much-improved manner and enable them to take up the challenges of the 21st century.

Swachh Bharat Mission Academy: With its mobile based technology, Swachh Bharat Mission Academy will significantly boost the capacity building efforts in training of Swachhagrahis as well as PRIs members, community-based organizations, NGOs, SHGs and others who are associated with phase 2 of SBM(G).

Import embargo on 101 items beyond given timelines to boost indigenisation of defence production: The Department of Military Affairs (DMA), Ministry of Defence (MoD) has prepared a list of 101 items for which there would be an embargo on the import beyond the timeline indicated against them. This is a big step towards self-reliance in defence.

- It also offers a great opportunity to the Indian defence industry to rise to the occasion to manufacture the items in the negative list by using their own design and development capabilities or adopting the technologies designed and developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to meet the requirements of the Armed Forces in the coming years.
- The embargo on imports is planned to be progressively implemented between 2020 to 2024. The aim behind promulgation of the list is to apprise the Indian defence industry about the anticipated requirements of the Armed Forces so that they are better prepared to realise the goal of indigenisation.
- The MoD has adopted many progressive measures to encourage and facilitate 'Ease of Doing Business' by the defence Production entities. All necessary steps would be taken to ensure that timelines for production of equipment as per the Negative Import List are met, which will include a co-ordinated mechanism for hand holding of the industry by the Defence Services.

Shri V.V. Giri

- India's fourth President
- Joined the Indian National Congress and participated in Annie Besant's Home Rule League
- Joined non-cooperation movement led by M K Gandhi in 1922
- Known for his role in the labour movement in India.

President's address on 74th Independence Day

- President Ram Nath Kovind's address to the nation on the eve of 74th Independence Day

- The below are some of the important excerpts from his address, important for various stages of the exam –

1. Self-reliance or 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative
   - India's self-reliance means being self-sufficient without alienating or creating distance from the world.
   - India will continue to engage with the world economy while maintaining its identity.
   - It has been the tradition of India that we do not just live for ourselves, but work for the well-being of the entire world.
2. Vasudhaiv kutumbakam : : the global community is but one family
3. When India won freedom, many predicted that our experiment with democracy will not last long. They saw our ancient traditions and rich diversity as hurdles in democratisation of our polity. But we have always nurtured them as our strengths that make the largest democracy in the world so vibrant. India has to continue playing its leading role for the betterment of humanity.
4. The ethos of our freedom struggle forms the foundation of modern India. Our visionary leaders brought together a diversity of world views to forge a common national spirit. They were committed to the cause of liberating Bharat Mata from oppressive foreign rule and securing the future of her children. Their thoughts and actions shaped the identity of India as a modern nation.
5. Gandhiji's teachings answer to present day problems: Troubled by social strife, economic problems, and climate change, the world should seek relief in Gandhiji's teachings. His quest for equality and justice is the mantra for our Republic.
6. The nation is indebted to doctors, nurses and other health workers who have been continuously on the forefront of our fight against this virus.
7. Look at the current crisis as an opportunity to initiate reforms to revitalise the economy for the benefit of all, specially farmers and small entrepreneurs.
8. The invisible virus has demolished the illusion that human being is the master of nature. It is still not too late for humanity to correct its course and live in harmony with nature. 'Human-centric collaboration' is more important than 'economy-centric inclusion', in the present context.
9. Compassion and mutual help have been adopted as basic values by the people in India. We need to further strengthen this virtue in our conduct, for better future.
10. Adoption of science and technology, in harmony with nature, will help sustain our survival and growth.
11. Prayer for the well-being

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः,सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः । सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु, मा कश्चिद् दुःखभाग् भवेत्॥
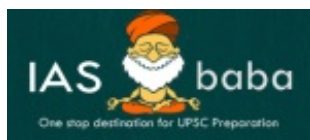
It means:

May all be happy,

May all be free from illness,

May all see what is auspicious,

May no one come to grief.

The message of this prayer for universal well-being is India's unique gift to humanity.

Must Read: Link 1

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (PIB) IAS UPSC – 17th August to 23rd August – 2020

iasbaba.com/2020/08/press-information-bureau-pib-ias-upsc-17th-august-to-23rd-august-2020

Date August 25, 2020

Press Information Bureau (PIB) IAS UPSC – 17 th to 23rd August, 2020

Table of Contents

ARCHIVES

GS-2

Setting up of National Recruitment Agency

(Topic: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment)

Cabinet approves creation of National Recruitment Agency (NRA), paving the way for a transformational reform in the recruitment process for central government jobs

NRA: A multi-agency body to encompass the first level test by the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), the Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) and the Institute of Banking Service Personnel (IBPS)

- Common eligibility Test (CET) to screen candidates at the first level for SSC, RRBs and IBPS
- A computer based online Common Eligibility Test (CET) for the Graduate, the Higher Secondary (12thpass) and the Matriculate (10th Pass) candidates as a path-breaking reform.
- CET in Every District: Ease of Access to Rural youth, women and disadvantaged candidates
- Multiplicity of exams will not be there
- Robust use of ICT to eradicate malpractices
- CET Score to be valid for three years, no bar on attempts

Recruitment Reform – a major boon for the youth

At present, candidates seeking government jobs have to appear for separate examinations conducted by multiple recruiting agencies for various posts, for which similar eligibility conditions have been prescribed. Candidates have to pay fee to multiple recruiting agencies and also have to travel long distances for appearing in various exams. These multiple recruitment examinations are a burden on the candidates, as also on the respective recruitment agencies, involving avoidable/repetitive expenditure, law and order/security related issues and venue related problems. On an average, 2.5 crore to 3 crore candidates appear in each of these examinations. A common eligibility Test would enable these candidates to appear once and apply to any or all of these recruitment agencies for the higher level of examination. This would indeed be a boon to all the candidates.

Boosting Toy manufacturing in India

(Topic: Economy)

Aim: To boost manufacturing and global imprint of Indian toys

India is home to several toy clusters and thousands of artisans who produce indigenous toys which not only have cultural connect but also helps in building life-skills and psychomotor skills among children at an early age. Such clusters should be promoted through innovative and creative methods.

Indian toy market has huge potential and can bring a transformative change in the industry by promoting 'Vocal for Local' under AatmaNirbhar Bharat campaign.

- Focus should be on use of technology & innovation and towards manufacturing quality products that meet global standards
- Toys aligned with Indian culture and ethos should be used as pedagogical tools across all Anganwadi Centres and Schools for all-round development of children
- India should tap the huge potential in digital gaming arena by developing games that are inspired from Indian culture and folk tales

Measures to improve viability of sugar industry

(Topic: Economy)

Government has taken various measures to improve viability of sugar industry, thereby enabling sugar mills to make timely payment of cane dues of farmers. Going forward, diversion of excess sugarcane and sugar is the long term solution for addressing the problem of excess stock and improving viability of sugar industry. Ethanol is a green fuel & its blending with petrol also saves the country's foreign exchange.

Tri-partite agreement (TPA): As producers of ethanol (sugar mills), buyers of ethanol (OMCs) and the lenders (banks) are willing to enter into a tri-partite agreement (TPA) about producing, buying and paying for the ethanol through an escrow account etc., the banks can consider giving loans to sugar mills even with weak balance sheets

- Facilitate mills to avail loans from banks to set up new distilleries or to expand their existing distilleries, thereby enhancing the overall distillation capacity in the country and thus would help in achieving the blending target under Ethanol Blended with Petrol programme.
- It was assured by the States and industry that efforts would be made to increase supply of ethanol in the current as well as in ensuing ethanol supply years.

Divert excess sugarcane: To encourage sugar mills to divert excess sugarcane to produce ethanol for blending with petrol, the Government has allowed production of ethanol from B-Heavy Molasses, sugarcane juice, sugar syrup and sugar; and has also fixed the remunerative ex-mill price of ethanol derived from these feed-stocks. The State-wise targets for ethanol manufacture have also been fixed.

Reasons for Ethanol Blending:

- It is estimated that a 5% blending can result in replacement of around 1.8 million Barrels of crude oil.
- As the ethanol molecule contains oxygen, it allows the engine to more completely combust the fuel, resulting in fewer emissions and thereby reducing the occurrence of environmental pollution.
- The renewable ethanol content, which is a by-product of the sugar industry, is expected to result in a net reduction in the emission of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide (CO) and hydrocarbons (HC).

Challenges in Ethanol Blending:

- Less Production: Currently, domestic production of bioethanol is not sufficient to meet the demand for bio-ethanol for blending with petrol at Indian OMCs.
- Sugar mills do not have the financial stability to invest in biofuel plants.
- There are also concerns among investors on the uncertainty on the price of bioethanol in the future as the prices of both sugarcane and bio-ethanol are set by the central government.
- Water Footprint: While India has become one of the top producers of ethanol but it lags top producers, the USA and Brazil, by a huge margin and remains inefficient in terms of water usage.
  - India's water requirements for producing ethanol are not met through rainwater and the groundwater is used for drinking and other purposes.
  - Water footprint, that is water required to produce a litre of ethanol, includes rainwater at the root zone used by ethanol-producing plants such as sugarcane, and surface, ground water, and fresh water required to wash away pollutants.

- Limited Sugarcane Availability: Sugarcane is another limited resource that affects the ethanol blending in the country. In order to achieve a 20% blend rate, almost one-tenth of the existing net sown area will have to be diverted for sugarcane production. Any such land requirement is likely to put a stress on other crops and has the potential to increase food prices.
- India's biofuel policy stipulates that fuel requirements must not compete with food requirements and that only surplus food crops should be used for fuel production, if at all.
- Lack of Alternatives: Producing ethanol from crop residue can be a good alternative but the annual capacity of biorefinery is still not enough to meet the 5% petrol-ethanol blending requirement.
- Other biofuels such as Jatropha have often proven to be commercially unviable.

Utilization in making alcohol-based hand-sanitizers and for blending in Petrol

Ethanol is considered an effective substance against a large spectrum of microorganisms which can linger on the skin.

- A 2004 study published in the Clinical Microbiology Reviews journal says the best antimicrobial efficacy can be achieved with ethanol (60-85%), isopropanol (60-80%) and n-propanol (60-80%).
- Alcohol attacks viruses and other disease-causing pathogens by damaging their cell structures. Some alcohols damage the layers that envelop the virus, while some just break down the cells.
- The novel coronavirus, for instance, is an enveloped virus surrounded by a fat layer. Lipid membrane viruses—like the coronavirus—can be killed using alcohol-based disinfectants and hand sanitizers. They simply break down the membrane or the layer of fat, leaving the virus unable to infect an individual.

Oral nanomedicine may bring relief for Kala-Azar & other neglected diseases

(Topic: New development in medicine)

Patients affected by Kala- Azar, scientifically called Visceral leishmaniasis (VL), one of the most neglected tropical diseases may soon find relief in an oral nanomedicine from India. The oral therapeutics could help in the control and elimination of VL, around 95 % of which is reported from Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Nepal, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan.

There has been a development of an oral nanomedicine with the help of surface-modified solid lipid nanoparticles based combinational cargo system for combating visceral leishmaniasis by the Institute of Nano Science & Technology (INST), Mohali.

This study by INST team may lead to product and process patent enhancing the role of our country for developing innovative therapy against neglected diseases. The usage of lower therapeutic dose of the purified drugs through nanomodifications will be a boon in reducing toxicity, which has been a major hindrance in the existing conventional treatment when administered orally.

Kala Azar (Visceral leishmaniasis)

- Also called as black fever or dumdum fever
- Disease caused by the protozoan parasites
- This disease is second largest parasitic killer in the world (after Malaria)
- The parasite migrates to internal organs such as liver, spleen (hence "visceral") and bone marrow, and, if left untreated, will almost always result in the death of the host. Signs and symptoms include fever, weight loss, fatigue, anemia, and substantial swelling of the liver and spleen.

A Tattoo sensor for monitoring vital health parameters

(Topic: New development in medicine)

Wearable sensors that can retract information from human body using its largest organ, the skin

- The sensor promises inconspicuous and continuous monitoring of vital health parameters of an individual, like pulse rate, respiration rate, and surface electromyography.
- The sensor serves as a single conduit for sensing respiration rate and pulse, dispensing with the need of mounting multiple sensors.
- Its remarkably high sensitivity with a gauge factor (GF) has been ascribed to the development of nano-cracks and their propagation through the film upon application of strain.
- The fast response and highly repeatable sensor follows easy fabrication steps and can be patterned into any shape and size using a laser.

The Need: Active research in the field of epidermal electronics has spawned an important class of wearable sensors that aim to deliver point of care diagnostics with comfortable and robust user experience. Conventional medical devices are bulky, rigid, and non-practical because they do not allow continuous monitoring of vital health parameters while continuing day to day life schedule. The soft and curvilinear shape of human body needs skin like sensors that can be tattooed on the body with an easy transfer process.

Prelims oriented News

The first Parkash Purab of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

- The first Prakash Purb marks the installation of Guru Granth Sahib in Harmandir Sahib, also known as Golden temple, in 1604.
- Gatka: A traditional Sikh martial art

'eSanjeevani' telemedicine service: The digital platform of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has completed 2 lakh tele-consultations.

- eSanjeevani platform has enabled two types of telemedicine services viz. Doctor-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani) and Patient-to-Doctor (eSanjeevani OPD) Tele-consultations. The former is being implemented under the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre (AB-HWC). It aims to implement tele-consultation in all the 1.5 lakh Health and Wellness Centres in conjunction with identified Medical College hospitals in a 'Hub and Spoke' model.
- eSanjeevani has been implemented so far by 23 States and other States are in the process of rolling it out.

Swachh Survekshan-2020

- Awards for Swachh Survekshan 2020 was recently announced.
- It is the fifth edition of the annual cleanliness urban survey.
- Conducted by: the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- Cleanest City of India (> 1 lakh population category):
    - Indore (1st)
    - Surat (2nd)
    - Navi Mumbai (3rd)
- Indore has created record by winning title of cleanest city fourth time in a row.
- Cleanest State of India (> 100 Urban Local Bodies category) : Chhattisgarh.
- Cleanest State of India (<100 ULB category) : Jharkhand
- Cleanest town along the banks of river Ganga: Varanasi
- Cleanest capital city: New Delhi
- Cleanest city with over 40 lakh population: Ahmedabad

Harit Path

- A mobile app to monitor the plantations through geo-tagging and web-based GIS enabled monitoring tools.
- The app has been developed by NHAI to monitor location, growth, species details, maintenance activities, targets and achievements of each of its field units for each and every plant under all plantation projects.

Nuakhai Juhar: Celebrating the hardwork of our farmers

- Celebrated in: Western Odisha and adjoining areas of Simdega in Jharkhand.
- It is observed to welcome the new rice of the season, on the fifth day of the lunar fortnight of the month of Bhadrapada or Bhaadra (August–September), the day after the Ganesh Chaturthi festival.

- People offer the newly harvested crop called Nabanha to their respective presiding deities, as a part of the rituals
- Also called Nuakhai Parab or Nuakahi Bhetghat

Atal Innovation Mission partners with India-Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre to expand Start-up ecosystem

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and Business Sweden on behalf of India Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre are collaborating to promote the disruptive potential of Indian entrepreneurs, and, boost the vibrant start-up ecosystem across the country.
- Through this collaboration, these initiatives are set to receive support by the means of conducting programs, awareness campaigns, various activities and events that would promote the overall innovation grid of both the countries through these programmes.

National Food Security Act 2013

- Government of India enacted the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).
- The Act covers upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population.
- The targeted population shall receive subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System, thus covering about two-thirds of the population.
- Ministry involved: Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- JJM aims at providing potable water at service level of 55 litre per capita per day (lpcd) to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) by 2024.
- The fund sharing pattern between the Centre and states is 90:10 for Himalayan and North-Eastern States, 50:50 for other states, and 100% for Union Territories.
- Every village will prepare a Village Action Plan (VAP) which will have three components:
    - Water source and its maintenance
    - Water supply and
    - Grey-water (domestic wastewater) management.

Kisan Credit Cards

The Kisan Credit Card Scheme aims at providing adequate and timely credit support from the banking system under a single window with flexible and simplified procedure to the farmers to meet the short-term credit requirements for cultivation of crops, investment credit requirements for agriculture and allied activities and other needs. The KCC is necessary to procure good quality inputs to raise productivity and production.

In an effort to buffer the agricultural sector from the shock of COVID-19, a special saturation drive is underway to provide concessional credit to farmers through Kisan Credit Card (KCC). **1.22 crore KCCs** have been sanctioned with credit limit of Rs. 1,02,065 crore. This will go a long way in reviving the rural economy and accelerating agricultural growth.

Launch of Tribal Health & Nutrition Portal – 'Swasthya'

- A first of its kind e-portal, providing all health and nutrition related information of the tribal population of India in a single platform.
- Swasthya will also curate innovative practices, research briefs, case studies, and best practices collected from different parts of India to facilitate the exchange of evidence, expertise and experiences.
- **The need:** Although the public health standards have improved over time, the differences between tribal and non-tribal populations remain.

Going Online as Leaders (GOAL)' Programme

- **By:** Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) in partnership with Facebook India to digitally skill and empower5000 youth from tribal communities to become leaders of tomorrow by leveraging the power of digital technology.
- The digitally enabled program envisages to act as a catalyst to explore hidden talents of the tribal youth, which will help in their personal development as well as contribute to all-round upliftment of their society.
- To upskill and empower 5,000 tribal youths in the current phase to harness the full potential of digital platforms and tools to learn new ways of doing business, explore and connect with domestic and international market.
- Designed with a long term vision to develop the potential of tribal youth and women to help them acquire skills and knowledge through mentorship in various sectors including horticulture, food processing, bee keeping, tribal art and culture, medicinal herbs, entrepreneurship among others.
- Demonstrates affirmative action which will go a long way to reduce the gap between tribal and non-tribal youth and will enlist participation of tribal youth in nation-building.

Project Lion

According to June 5, 2020 census, the number of Asiatic lions have now risen by 29% over five years to an estimated 674 in the Gir forest region and other areas of coastal Saurashtra, Gujarat. During 2015, their population was 523 lions. Geographically, distribution area has also increased by 36%.

- Project Lion will entail habitat development, engage modern technologies in lion management and address the issues of disease in lion and its associated species through advanced world class research and veterinary care.

- The project will also be addressing the Human-Wildlife conflict which will involve local communities living in the vicinity and will also provide livelihood opportunities.
- Using the latest technology, the focus will be on health management and holistically providing world standard care, addressing all that is required to conserve a species

Project Dolphin will aim at the protection and conservation of the Dolphins in the rivers and oceans of the country.

- The project will involve the conservation of aquatic habitat and Dolphins through the use of modern technology, especially in anti-poaching activities and enumeration.
- Project Dolphin will engage the fishermen and other rivers and ocean dependent populations to improve the livelihood of the local communities.
- The conservation of Dolphin will also envisage activities which will also help in the mitigation of pollution in rivers and the oceans.
- This is also a centre of attraction for tourism. Will empower the stakeholders like the river-dependent population in reducing river pollution and allowing sustainable fishery and river-based other livelihood options through scientifically oriented conservation methods.

Pandit Jasraj

- Known for his unique voice which had both depth and softness, Pandit Jasraj was one of a handful of remaining old school musical giants of the Indian classical world, alongside artists like Bhimsen Joshi and Kishori Amonkar. Incredibly, he was performing and teaching online until the end with a remarkably robust, age-defying voice.
- Jasraj was a pioneering artist well known for his egalitarian approach. He incorporated Indian devotional music such as haveli sangeet and bhajans (devotional songs/hymns) into a classical milieu, transforming them into serious pieces; people loved his devotional music and he maintained mass appeal in a style where bhava (emotion) and devotion were paramount, yet all the while based on a very serious classical foundation.
- Over time he evolved the Mewati gharana to its greatest heights of ornamentation and sophistication, and proved himself to be a gifted composer, adding many compositions to the Mewati canon.
- Ornamentation like *meend* (sliding from one note to the next), *kan swar* (the use of grace notes), *gamak* (oscillation between notes), *murkhi* (a short cluster of notes) and *laykari* (rhythmic work), were all facets of the traditional classical way of singing which he emphasised in the Mewati style.

Read: National Sports Awards 2020

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