Cooperatives

- **What are cooperatives?**
  - According to ILO, a cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.
- **Cooperatives in India**
  - Cooperatives are dominant in agriculture, credit and marketing, but not limited to those.
  - Some are big — IFFCO has around a third of the market share in fertilizers. In milk, cotton, handlooms, housing, edible oils, sugar and fisheries, they are formidable.
  - As market conditions are evolving, cooperatives in States such as Kerala have got into complex operations: running IT parks and medical colleges.
  - There are also cooperative marketing societies in rural areas and cooperative housing societies in urban areas.
  - The first credit cooperative society was formed in Banking in the year 1903 with the support of Government of Bengal.
  - Cooperative Credit Societies Act of India was enacted in 1904.
  - Like agriculture, cooperation is in the concurrent list.
  - In 1984, Parliament of India enacted the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act
  - The Constitution (Ninety Seventh Amendment) Act 2011 relating to the co-operatives is aimed to encourage economic activities of cooperatives which in turn help progress of rural India
- **Conclusion**
  - The case for transparency and efficiency in the sector is strong; that goal must be pursued not by scaring the very soul of the sector but by advancing the cooperative spirit.
  - The new Ministry could indeed be a catalyst, but it must not fashion itself as a command authority.
  - More avenues for expansion, such as insurance, remain untapped and the regulatory regime must evolve in step.
- **Ministry of Cooperation**
  - **Context**
    - Highlighting that 'Cooperative Societies' is a State subject under the Constitution, a parliamentary standing committee has advised the newly created Cooperation Ministry, which is headed by Amit Shah, to "exercise utmost prudence" in chalking out activities and programmes at the national level so that federal features of the country are not "impinged upon".
    - The committee's advice is significant as the ministry, formed in July 2021, is in the process of drafting a new national cooperation policy. The ministry has prepared the Multi State Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2022, to amend the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002, and it is expected to be cleared by the Union Cabinet soon.
  - **Significance**
    - It will provide a separate administrative, legal and policy framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country.
    - It will help deepen Co-operatives as a true people based movement reaching up to the grassroots.
    - It will work to streamline processes for 'Ease of doing business' for co-operatives and enable development of Multi-State Co-operatives
    - Under the new Ministry, the cooperative movement would get the required financial and legal power needed to penetrate into other states also.
    - Over the years, the cooperative sector has witnessed drying out of funding. Under the new Ministry, the cooperative structure would be able to get a new lease of life.
  - **Criticism**
    - Considering the fact that cooperatives fall in the State list of the Constitution, the Centre will have to innovate to provide legal sanctity for the new Ministry.
    - The sector has become an instrument of patronage and pilferage. Mismanagement and corruption destroyed the sector in some States.
    - Critics fear that this Ministry is purposed to concentrate even more powers in the hands of the Centre.
    - This move will turn disastrous if the attempt is to appropriate the political capital of the sector
- **97th Constitutional Amendment**
  - **Context**
    - In a major boost for federalism, Supreme Court struck down parts of a Constitution amendment which shrank the exclusive authority of States over its cooperative societies.
  - **Background**
    - Part IXB, introduced in the Constitution through the 97th Amendment of 2012, dictated the terms for running cooperative societies.
    - The provisions in the amendment, passed by Parliament without getting them ratified by State legislatures as required by the Constitution, went to the extent of determining the number of directors a society should have or their length of tenure and even the necessary expertise.
  - **Highlights**
    - Court held that cooperative societies come under the "exclusive legislative power" of State legislatures.
    - Part IX B, which consists of Articles 243ZH to 243ZT, has "significantly and substantially impacted" State legislatures' "exclusive legislative power" over its cooperative sector under Entry 32 of the State List.
    - Court pointed out how Article 243ZI makes it clear that a State may only make law on the incorporation, regulation and winding up of a society subject to the provisions of Part IXB of the 97th Constitution Amendment.
    - However, the court did not strike down the portions of Part IXB of the Amendment concerning "Multi State Cooperative Societies" due to the lack of ratification.
    - When it comes to Multi State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) with objects not confined to one State, the legislative power would be that of the Union of India which is contained in Entry 44 List I (Union List).
  - **Features**
    - Constitution (Ninety Seventh Amendment) Act 2012 relating to the Co-operatives was enacted to encourage economic activities of Cooperatives which in turn help progress of rural India.
    - It is expected to not only ensure autonomous and democratic functioning of Cooperatives, but also the accountability of the management to the members and other Stakeholders.
    - Incorporation, regulation and winding up of cooperative Societies based on the principles of Voluntary formation, democratic member Control, member economic participation and autonomous functioning
    - Specifying the maximum number of directors of a Co-operatives Society to be not exceeding twenty-one members
    - A fixed term of five years from the date of election in respect of the elected members of the board and its office bearers; and an authority or body for the Conduct of elections to a Cooperative Society
    - A maximum time limit of Six months during which board of directors of a Co-operative Society Could be kept under Supersession or suspension
    - Independent professional audit
    - Right of information to the members of the Co-operative Societies
    - Empowering the State Governments to obtain periodic reports of activities and accounts of Co-operatives Societies
    - Reservation of one seat for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes and two Seats for women on the board of every Cooperative Society, which have individuals as members from Such Categories
    - Penalties in respect of offences relating to Co-Operatives Societies.

21/3/2021

CYCLONE ASANI

Context

- Cyclone Asani is projected to move along and off the Andaman Islands towards Myanmar and south Bangladesh coast, India Meteorological Department Director General said.
- He clarified that the cyclone will not make a landfall in Andaman Islands. The weather system is expected to intensify first into a deep depression and later into a cyclonic storm

IMD's colour coded warning system

- Green: This code means that "all is well" and there is no likelihood of any adverse weather-related and there are no advisories issued.
- Yellow: The colour yellow signals authorities to "be aware" or on their guard, with the likelihood of severely bad weather that could last several days at a stretch, while also suggesting that the weather could take a turn for the worse and upset daily activities
- Orange: Meaning "Be prepared", the IMD issues the orange alert as a warning for extremely bad weather, electricity blackouts and the possibility of communication disruptions, including road and rail closures.
- Red: The IMD issues the highest level of warning—indicating authorities should "take action"—only when it is guaranteed that bad weather is going to upend travel and power and pose a significant risk to life.

Conditions for formation

- A consistent source of warmth as tropical cyclones are thermally induced low-pressure systems
- Large sea surface with a temperature above 27° C
- Presence of the Coriolis force
- Small variations within the vertical wind speed
- Upper divergence above the ocean level system
- A pre-existing weak low-pressure area or low-level-cyclonic circulation

How IMD categorises cyclones

1. Low-pressure area: Windspeed does not exceed 31 km per hour
2. Depression: Windspeed between 31-49 km per hour
3. Deep depression: 50-61 km per hour
4. Cyclonic storm: 62-88 km per hour
5. Severe cyclonic storm: 89-117 km per hour
6. Very severe cyclonic storm: 118-167 km per hour
7. Extremely severe cyclonic storm: 168-221 km per hour
8. Super cyclonic storm: 222 km per hour and higher

How are cyclones named?

- Cyclones, developing over the north Indian Ocean including the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, are named by the Regional Specialised Meteorological Centres (RSMCs) and Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (TCWCs). There are six RSMCs and five TCWCs in total, which includes the IMD.
- Thirteen countries are tasked with naming cyclones originating in the Indian Ocean region. They are Thailand, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Oman, Myanmar, Maldives, Bangladesh, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen, and India. The names suggested by them are used sequentially when a cyclone develops.
- The name 'Yaas' was suggested by Oman and 'Taukte' by Myanmar.
- India has, so far, proposed the names Gati (speed), Tej (speed), Marasu (musical instrument in Tamil), Aag (fire), Jhar (storm), Ghurni (whirlpool), Vega (speed) and Neer (water).
- The next cyclone—after Yaas—is likely to be named Gulab, suggested by Pakistan.

14/3/2022

SEMICONDUCTOR SHORTAGE

Context
- Supply of semiconductors, which plummeted due to Covid-related disruptions but had started picking up as manufacturing chains normalised, is now being threatened once again by the Ukraine crisis. This is on account of supply of two key raw materials — neon and palladium — that are at a risk of being constrained.
- Union Cabinet approved a ₹76,000 crore scheme to boost semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country, taking the total amount of incentives announced for the electronics sector to ₹2.3 lakh crore

Why shortage?
- The trigger point was the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns across the world that forced chip-making facilities to shut in countries like Japan, South Korea, China and the US.
- A key feature in a chip shortage is that it almost always causes cascading effects, given that the first one creates pent-up demand that becomes the cause for the follow-up famine.
- According to a report by Moody's Analytics, palladium and neon are two resources that are key to the production of semiconductor chips. Now that Russia supplies over 40 per cent of world's palladium and Ukraine produces 70 per cent of neon, "we can expect the global chip shortage to worsen should the military conflict persist

About semiconductors
- A semiconductor is a material that allows electrical conductivity between a conductor and an insulator.
- They have less resistivity than insulators and more than conductors. The resistance of the semiconductor decreases with an increase in temperature and vice versa.
- Semiconductors are made from pure elements like silicon or germanium, or compounds such as gallium arsenide. Sometimes their conductivity is changed through doping.

Need
- Tackle supply shocks
- Employment creation and revenue boost
- Meet the rising demand
- Countries having a sufficient supply of chips would be in a better position to mold the future course of geopolitics, driven by data and the digital revolution.
- Chips made locally will be designated as "trusted sources" and can be used in products ranging from CCTV cameras to 5G equipment. This would improve the national cybersecurity profile.

Challenges
- High Cost of establishment
- Bureaucratic inefficiencies
- Unstable power supply
- Technological Constraint
- FDI in electronics is less than 1% of the total FDI inflow because of the dearth of skilled labor, delays in land acquisition, and the uncertain tax regime.

Palladium
- Palladium is used for multiple purposes in semiconductor and electronic manufacturing. It is used to coat electrodes that help control flow of electricity. It is also used in plating of microprocessors and printed circuit boards — which is an essential process of chip making. Russia accounts for nearly half the global supplies of palladium and the multiple trade sanctions on Moscow threaten to constrain the availability of the element.

Neon
- Neon gas is used in the photolithography process that is the most common method for fabricating integrated circuits. Specifically, the neon gas is used in the laser machines that carve the integrated circuits. But for use of neon gas in the semiconductor industry, the gas has to reach 99.99% purity levels — which makes it a rarity. More than half of semiconductor-grade neon comes from Ukrainian companies Incas and Cryoin.

India's sources
- There are only a handful of companies globally that do front-end manufacturing at scale.
- Globally, this entire value chain has seeped in the interdependence between a handful of countries like the USA, Taiwan, Japan, China, and some European nations.
- Most of the global semiconductor companies having an R&D footprint in India.
- However, 100% of our chips, memory, and display are imported into the country. In 2020, India spent $15bn on electronic imports, with 37% coming from China.
- Although India has two fabs — SITAR, a unit of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Bengaluru, and a semiconductor laboratory in Chandigarh. These build silicon chips for strategic purposes like defense and space and not for commercial use.

Significance
- Semiconductors are the building blocks of today's technology
- Semiconductors make the devices more compact, less expensive, and more powerful.
- Semiconductors will continue to enable the world's greatest breakthroughs. From aerospace and consumer electronics to energy and medicine, entire industries will be transformed.

FUEL PRICING IN INDIA

Context
- With the Russia-Ukraine crisis intensifying, United States President Joe Biden has announced a ban on all crude oil and natural gas imports from Russia into the US, while the UK announced that it would phase out imports of Russian oil by the end of this year.
- These moves will further increase crude oil prices, which in turn will stoke inflation across the world — particularly in the US and its allied nations in Europe, which are already reeling from inflation rates that are at their highest in decades. That is because Russia is the world's second-largest producer of oil as well as the second-largest exporter.

What is the fuel pricing mechanism?
- The price of petrol and diesel in India is not determined by the actual costs incurred by PSU refiners.
- Rather, a formula named the trade parity price (TPP) is used to price these products.
- It assumes that 80% of petrol and diesel is imported into India and 20% is exported
- So, petrol and diesel prices in India are determined based on prices of these fuels in the international market and not on the basis of crude oil prices.
- From mid-June 2017, the pricing of petrol and diesel is done through a 'daily pricing' mechanism, based on a 15-day rolling average international rate.

Role of taxes
- Petrol and diesel are government's good source of revenue.
- During the crude crash earlier in 2020, a cash-strapped Centre raised excise duty on petrol and diesel.
- Many States too increased their sales tax/VAT.
- But when oil prices started rising, the taxes were not rolled back.
- So fuel prices increased, and customers bore the brunt.

Impact of high prices on India
- The increase in oil prices will increase the country's import bill, and further disturb its current account deficit (excess of imports of goods and services over exports).
- The increase in crude prices could also further increase inflationary pressures that have been building up over the past few months.
- If oil prices continue to increase, the government shall be forced to cut taxes on petroleum and diesel which may cause loss of revenue and deteriorate its fiscal balance.
- Although the rising prices have impacted the world, India is particularly at a disadvantage as any increase in global prices can affect its import bill, stoke inflation and increase its trade deficit, which in turn will slow its economic recovery.
- The increase in gas prices has put upward pressure on the price of both Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) used as a transport fuel and Piped Natural Gas (PNG) used as a cooking fuel.

Reasons for high prices
- Slow Production: Key oil producing countries have kept crude oil supplies on a gradually increasing production schedule despite a sharp increase in global crude oil prices.
- Supply Side Issues: Supply side issues in the US including disruptions caused by hurricane Ida and lower than expected natural gas supplies from Russia amid increasing demand in Europe have raised the prospect of natural gas shortages in the winter.

DIRECT TAX REVENUE

Context
- Direct tax collections, comprising corporation tax and personal income tax and net of refunds, touched ₹13.63 tn as of 16 Mar, 9% higher than the FY22 revised estimate of ₹12.5 trillion announced last month, the CBDT said. After the Q4 advance tax payments, direct tax collections are 48% more than the year earlier

What are Revenue Receipts?
- The money received by a business through normal business operations is known as revenue receipts.

What is Non-Tax Revenue?
- Non-Tax Revenue is the recurring income that is earned from the sources other than taxes by the government. They are the revenue receipts that are not generated by taxing the public. Some of the major sources of non-tax revenue are: Interests, Power Supply Fees, License Fee, Fines and Penalties, Escheats

Tax Revenue- Direct Tax and Indirect Tax
- The taxes that are imposed on the property and income of an individual and a company are known as direct taxes. Direct taxes are paid directly to the government by the companies and the individuals.
- The taxes that affect the income and property of an individual and a company through their consumption expenditure are called indirect taxes. Indirect taxes are imposed on goods and services and are known to be compulsory payments.

11/03/2022

THE HINDU

Indian firms' outward FDI plunges 67%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

India Inc.'s direct overseas investment declined 67% to $753.61 million in February this year, Reserve Bank of India data showed.

Domestic investors had invested more than $2.28 billion in overseas ventures as part of the outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) in February 2021.

Of the invested amount in February, $237.84 million was in the form of equity infusion, $230.06 million as loan and $285.72 million by way of issuance of guarantees, showed the RBI data. Comparing month-on-month, the investments fell 56% from $1.71 billion in January.

OFDI AND FDI

FDI

- FDI is the process whereby residents of one country (the home country) acquire ownership of assets for the purpose of controlling the production, distribution and other activities of a firm in another country (the host country).
- It is different from Foreign Portfolio Investment where the foreign entity merely buys stocks and bonds of a company. FPI does not provide the investor with control over the business.
- Flows of FDI comprise capital provided (either directly or through other related enterprises) by a foreign direct investor to an enterprise.
- FDI has three components, viz., equity capital, reinvested earnings and intra-company loans.
  1. Equity capital is the foreign direct investor's purchase of shares of an enterprise in a country other than its own.
  2. Reinvested earnings comprise the direct investors' share (in proportion to direct equity participation) of earnings not distributed as dividends by affiliates, or earnings not remitted to the direct investor. Such retained profits by affiliates are reinvested.
  3. Intra-company loans or intra-company debt transactions refer to short- or long-term borrowing and lending of funds between direct investors (or enterprises) and affiliate enterprises.
- Routes through which India gets FDI:
  Automatic Route: In this, the foreign entity does not require the prior approval of the government or the RBI.
  Government route: In this, the foreign entity has to take the approval of the government.

Context

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ODI

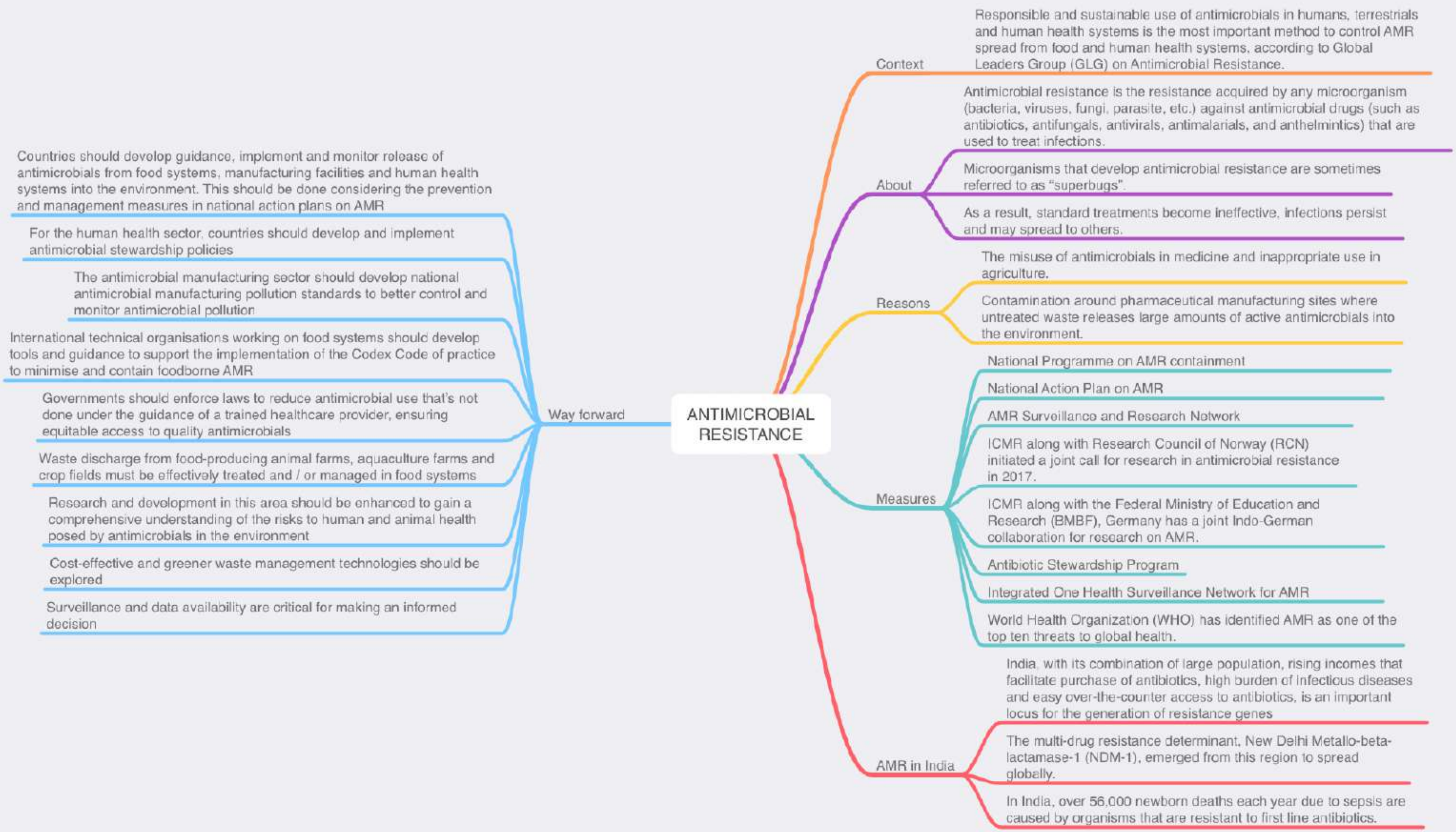
- An outward direct investment (ODI) is a business strategy in which a domestic firm expands its operations to a foreign country.
- ODI can take many different forms depending on the company. For example, some companies will make a green field investment, which is when a parent company creates a subsidiary in a foreign country
- A merger or acquisition can also occur in a foreign country (and so may be considered an outward direct investment).
- Finally, a company may decide to expand an existing foreign facility as part of an ODI strategy.
- Employing ODI is a natural progression for firms if their domestic markets become saturated and better business opportunities are available abroad.
- The extent of a nation's outward direct investment can be seen as an indication that its economy is mature. ODI has been shown to increase a country's investment competitiveness and has proven to be crucial for long-term, sustainable growth. American, European, and Japanese firms, for example, have long made extensive investments outside their domestic markets.
- Because of their more rapid growth rates, emerging market economies often receive large amounts of ODI, as China has for the past two decades.

4/3/2022: DOWNTOEARTH

WASTE

Global Leaders Group call for action to tackle antimicrobial waste

Discharge management from food systems, manufacturing facilities and human health systems into the environment is key, says document



7/3/2021

Govt approves Modernization scheme to equip Central Armed Police Forces with modern state-of-the-art weapons, equipment

"*Karamyogi* Of Country": Amit Shah On CISF's Role During Evacuation Operations

CENTRAL ARMED POLICE FORCES

- Context
  - Centre has approved the Modernisation Plan-IV scheme for Central Armed Police Forces. It will equip the forces with modern state-of-the-art weapons and equipment as per their operational requirement, keeping in view their deployment pattern in different theatres. Besides, upgraded IT solutions will also be provided to them. The scheme with a total outlay of 1,523 crore rupees to be implemented by the Home Ministry from February 2022 to March 2026.
  - Union Home Minister Amit Shah pitched for a "hybrid" security model where the CISF could train and certify private security agencies so that the latter can take over the task of efficiently guarding various kinds of industrial and manufacturing units in the country.
- Border Security Force: is the border guards of the country and is called the 'India's First Line of Defence'.
- Assam Rifles: established in 1835, the oldest of all paramilitary forces, plays a crucial role in North East India, handling counterinsurgency and border security operations.
- Central Industrial Security Force: was established in 1969, under an Act of Parliament, "Central Industrial Security Force Act, 1968." It provides integrated security cover to the PSUs, airports, SEZs, nuclear installations, space establishments, seaports, power plants, sensitive Government buildings, heritage monuments. CISF is also responsible to provide protection to the persons classified as Z Plus, Z, X, Y.
- Central Reserved Police Force: was established by the enactment of the CRPF Act in 1949. The primary mission of the Central Reserve Police Force is counter-insurgency operations. It also assists the State and Union Territories in police operations to maintain law and order. Apart from this, the force participates as a police force in the UN peace-keeping missions.
- Indo-Tibetan Border Police: was created under the CRPF Act. It guards the Indo-Tibetan border and the mountainous regions of the India-China border and monitors the northern borders. It has been deployed in UN peacekeeping missions as well.
- Sashatra Seema Bal: They guard Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Borders. They are also deployed during elections as polling booth security.
- Other Forces
  - Special Forces of India
    - National Security Guards: is a special forces unit under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It is established to counter the surge of militancy in the country.
    - Special Protection Group: is the most elite, nodal protection agency in the country. It is an armed force of the Union for providing immediate security to the Prime Minister of India, the former Prime Minister and members of their close family members. The Special Protection Group (SPG) under the Cabinet Secretariat commences under Special Protection Group Act, 1988.
  - Military Forces
    - Indian Army: is the land-based component of the armed forces. It is evolved from the armed forces of the East India Company, ultimately turned into the British Indian Army and the Indian Army after independence. It is commanded by the Chief of Army Staff (COAS). The Special Force of Indian Army is Parachute Regiment
    - Indian Navy: secures India's maritime borders and interests. It also safeguards Indian trading vessels by combating piracy on the high seas. Along with this, it assists the common people during disasters. It is commanded by the Chief of the Naval Staff - an Admiral. The Marine Commando Force, also known as MARCOS is a Special Forces unit of the Indian Navy.
    - Indian Air Force: primary responsibility is to secure the Indian airspace and to conduct aerial warfare during a conflict. Chief of Air Staff (An Air Marshal) is the commander of the air forces in India. Garud Commando Force is the special forces unit of the Indian Air Force.

IPCC CLIMATE REPORT

About IPCC

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is made up of the world's leading climate scientists, charged with publishing regular comprehensive updates of global knowledge on the climate crisis, intended to inform government policymaking.
- Each "assessment report" takes about five to seven years to complete, involving hundreds of scientists reviewing the work of thousands more experts. The current report – being published in four parts, from August 2021 to October 2022 – is the sixth since the body was set up in 1988.
- The three working groups that make up the IPCC each publish their own reports. The first looks at the physical basis of climate science – that is, how the chemistry and physics of the atmosphere are changing and are likely to change in future, and whether human influence is responsible. The second – the group producing the latest report – assesses the effects of climate change, such as extreme weather, droughts, floods and temperature rises, and how humanity can adapt to these.
- The third group looks at ways of cutting emissions, and the fourth report is a synthesis, to be published in October, ahead of the Cop27 UN climate summit, to be held in Egypt in November.

What now

- IPCC reports form the scientific basis on which countries across the world build their policy responses to climate change. These reports, on their own, are not policy prescriptive: They do not tell countries or governments what to do. They are only meant to present factual situations with as much scientific evidence as is possible.
- And yet, these can be of immense help in formulating the action plans to deal with climate change. The detailed nature of this latest report, with respect to regional and sectoral impacts, presents actionable intelligence, particularly for countries that lack the resources or the capacity to make their own impact assessments.
- The fact that these findings are the product of the combined understanding of the largest group of experts on climate science lends it a credibility greater than any individual study.
- These reports also form the basis for international climate change negotiations that decide on the responses at the global level. It is these negotiations that have produced the Paris Agreement, and previously the Kyoto Protocol.

Context

- The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned of multiple climate change-induced disasters in the next two decades even if strong action is taken to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gas emissions.

Key findings

- Half a million more people are at risk of serious flooding every year, and a billion living on coasts will be exposed by 2050. Rising temperatures and rainfall are increasing the spread of diseases in people, such as dengue fever, and in crops, livestock and wildlife.
- 3.5 billion people are highly vulnerable to climate impacts and half the world's population suffers severe water shortages at some point each year. One in three people are exposed to deadly heat stress, and this is projected to increase to 50% to 75% by the end of the century.
- Even if the world keeps heating below 1.6C by 2100 – and we are already at 1.1C – then 8% of today's farmland will become climatically unsuitable, just after the global population has peaked above 9 billion. Severe stunting could affect 1 million children in Africa alone. If global heating continues and little adaptation is put in place, 183 million more people are projected to go hungry by 2050.
- The ability to produce food relies on the water, soils and pollination provided by a healthy natural world, and the report said protection of wild places and wildlife is fundamental to coping with the climate crisis. But animals and plants are being exposed to climatic conditions not experienced for tens of thousands of years. Half of the studied species have already been forced to move and many face extinction.
- Maintaining the resilience of nature at a global scale depends on the conservation of 30% to 50% of Earth's land, freshwater and oceans, the IPCC report said. Today, less than 15% of land, 21% of freshwater and 8% of oceans are protected areas, and some regions, like the Amazon, have switched from storing carbon to emitting it.