



APTI PLUS

Academy for Civil Services Pvt. Ltd.

PIB YOJANA KURUKSHETRA COMPILATION



NOVEMBER 2021



IASOGYAN
PREDICT THE UNPREDICTABLE

PIB

INDEX

General Studies -II

1. River Cities Alliance.
2. Atmosphere' & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)
3. O-SMART.
4. National Action Plan to Combat Anti-Microbial Resistance.
5. All India Survey on Domestic Workers.
6. Geographical Information System (GIS).
7. Sydney Dialogue.
8. PM Gati Shakti NMP.
9. Bhasha Sangam Initiative.
10. Draft Mediation Bill.
11. National Achievement Survey 2021.
12. Green Steel.
13. Comprehensive Policy Framework for promotion of Energy Storage in the Power Sector

General Studies III

1. Green Energy Collaboration
2. Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative.
3. Digital Banks.
4. OJ 287.
5. Glacial-Tectonic Interaction.
6. Autism Spectrum Disorder.
7. Mission 500 GW by 2030.
8. Best Tourism Village.
9. Expedition to Antarctica.
10. Adverse Air Quality Scenario in Delhi-NCR.

Foreign Affairs

Short Liners

GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-II

River Cities Alliance

Why in News

- Union Minister for Jal Shakti Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has recently launched the River Cities Alliance.
 - It is a dedicated platform for river cities in India to ideate, discuss and exchange information for sustainable management of urban rivers.
- The Secretariat of the Alliance will be set up at National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA), with NMCG's support.
- The participating cities in the River Cities Alliance are Dehradun, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Srinagar, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Munger, Patna, Berhampore, Hooghly-Chinsurah, Howrah, Jangipur, Maheshtala, Rajmahal, Sahibganj, Ayodhya, Bijnor, Farrukhabad, Kanpur, Mathura-Vrindavan, Mirzapur, Prayagraj, Varanasi, Aurangabad, Chennai, Bhubaneswar, Hyderabad, Pune, Udaipur and Vijayawada.

Background

- The Hon'ble Prime Minister in the meeting of the National Ganga Council held at Kanpur in December 2019, had highlighted the need for a new river centric thinking in planning for cities on the banks of rivers.
- Cities should be responsible for rejuvenating their rivers.
 - Subsequently, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA) have collaborated together to launch the River Cities Alliance (RCA).

Objective

- The primary objective of RCA is to provide the member cities with a platform to discuss and exchange information on aspects that are vital for sustainable management of urban rivers such as:
 - a. Minimizing their water footprint.
 - b. Reducing impacts on river and water bodies.
 - c. Capitalizing on natural, intangible, architectural heritage and associated services.
 - d. Develop self-sufficient, self-sustainable water resources through recycle, reuse strategy.

Brief Details

- The Alliance cities will work towards :
 - a. Adopting and localizing national policies and instruments with key river-related directions.
 - b. Prepare their Urban River Management Plans.
 - c. Develop city-specific sectoral strategies that are required for sustainable urban river management.
- The Alliance gives opportunities to these cities to strengthen governance aspects for river cities and improves their liveability to attract external economic investments, access state of the art knowledge and frameworks as well as an opportunity to serve as the site for unique demonstration projects which will be implemented by NIUA and NMCG.
- The 30 member cities include Haridwar, Rishikesh, Kanpur, Ayodhya, Patna, Howrah, Ayodhya, Varanasi, Prayagraj, etc. from Ganga basin states and Aurangabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bhubaneshwar, Pune, Udaipur, Vijayawada, etc. from non-Ganga basin states.

**UPSC
IAS/IPS
CLASSROOM
PROGRAMME
2022 & 2023**

₹1,30,000



Conclusion

- This is a first of its kind Alliance in the world and it symbolizes the successful partnership of the two Ministries i.e., Ministry of Jal Shakti and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The Alliance will focus on three broad themes- Networking, Capacity Building and Technical Support.
- The River Cities Alliance can play a crucial role in connecting cities with their rivers, and that it can be a model for all cities in the Basin and beyond to emulate.
- This Alliance will give an opportunity to municipal administrators and their teams to take path breaking initiatives and learn and inspire each other.

Atmosphere' & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)

Why in News

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has recently given its approval for continuation of the umbrella scheme "Atmosphere & Climate Research-Modelling Observing Systems & Services (ACROSS)" along with its eight sub-schemes to the next finance cycle of five years i.e. 2021-2026 at an estimated cost of Rs.2,135 crore.
- The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) through its units namely India Meteorological Department (IMD), National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF); Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) and Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).

Background

- One of the mandates of the Ministry of Earth Sciences is to observe weather, climate and ocean parameters and carry out R&D activities to develop and improve capability to forecast weather, climate and hazard related phenomena for societal, economic and environmental benefits including addressing science of climate change and developing climate services.
- The increased incidence of extreme weather events due to Global Climate change and the risk associated with severe weather has prompted MoES to formulate many target oriented programs, which are carried out in an integrated manner through IMD, IITM, NCMRWF and INCOIS.
- As a result, these activities are put together under the umbrella scheme "ACROSS".

Brief Details

- ACROSS scheme pertains to the atmospheric science programs of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and addresses different aspects of weather and climate services.
- Each of these aspects is incorporated as eight sub-schemes under the umbrella scheme "ACROSS" and is implemented in an integrated manner through the aforesaid four institutes.

Implementation Strategy and target

- The eight sub-schemes under the ACROSS scheme are multi-disciplinary in nature and will be implemented in an integrated manner through IMD, IITM, NCMRWF and INCOIS to cover all the aspects of the weather and climate. Each institute has a designated role for accomplishing the above tasks through the following eight schemes:
 - a. Commissioning of Polarimetric Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs)-IMD.
 - b. Up gradation of Forecast System-IMD.
 - c. Weather & Climate Services-IMD.
 - d. Atmospheric Observations Network-1 MD.
 - e. Numerical Modelling of Weather and Climate -NCMRWF
 - f. Monsoon Mission III- IITM/NCMRWF/INCOIS/IMD.
 - g. Monsoon Convection, Clouds and Climate Change (MC4)- IITM/NCMRWF/IMD
 - h. High Performance Computing System (HPCS)-IITM/NCMRWF

Major impact

- The scheme will provide improved weather, climate, ocean forecast and services, and other hazard related services thereby ensuring transfer of commensurate benefits to the end -user through various services like

- a. Public weather service.
- b. Agro-meteorological Services.
- c. Aviation services.
- f. Climate services, tourism, pilgrimage, power generation, water management, Sports & adventure etc.
- The whole process from generation of forecast to its delivery requires considerable manpower at every stage, thereby generating employment opportunities to many people.
- d. Environmental monitoring services.
- e. Hydro-meteorological services.

O-SMART

Why in News

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has recently given its approval for continuation of the umbrella scheme "*Ocean Services, Modelling, Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)*" of Ministry of Earth Sciences, for implementation during the period from 2021-26 at an overall cost of Rs. 2177 crore.

Brief Details

- The scheme encompasses seven sub-schemes namely :
 - a. Ocean Technology.
 - b. Ocean Modelling and Advisory Services (OMAS).
 - c. Ocean Observation Network (OON).
 - d. Ocean Non-Living Resources.
 - e. Marine Living Resources and Ecology (MLRE).
 - f. Coastal Research and Operation.
 - g. Maintenance of Research Vessels.
- These sub-schemes are being implemented by autonomous/attached institutes of the Ministry, viz. National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai; Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad; National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa, Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE), Kochi; and National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Chennai as well as involving other national institutes.
- A fleet of oceanographic and coastal research vessels of the Ministry provide required research support for scheme.
- *OSMART* being a multidisciplinary continuing scheme, the ongoing extensive research and technology development activities would augment capacity building of the nation in the oceanographic field at the international level.

Background

- The present decade has been declared as the *Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development* by the United Nations (UN) and continuation of the scheme would strengthen our stand in the global oceanographic research and technology development.
- Several major milestones have been achieved through the activities of the scheme, the most significant is India's recognition as *Pioneer Investor with International Seabed Authority (ISA)* for conducting extensive research on deep sea mining of *Poly Metallic Nodules (PMN)* and hydrothermal sulphides in the allotted area of the India Ocean.
- The technology development for desalination using low temperature thermal desalination installation of such facility in Lakshadweep islands is also a significant achievement.
- Moreover, India's ocean related activities are now extended from the Arctic to Antarctic region covering large ocean space which have been monitored by through in-situ and satellite-based observation.
- India has taken leadership role in implementing Indian Ocean component of *Global Ocean Observing System* in Intergovernmental.

Oceanographic Commission

- *Oceanographic Commission* through wide range of observations networks including both moored and drifters' types have been deployed and maintained in the Indian Ocean.
 - These observation network yields ocean forecast services for potential fishing ground and natural coastal hazards warning for storm surge associated with cyclone and Tsunami to stake holders at national levels as well as neighbouring countries.

- A state-of-the-art early warning system for oceanic disasters viz. tsunami, storm surges, has been established at INCOIS, Hyderabad to provide services for India and countries of the Indian Ocean, which have been recognized by UNESCO.
- Extensive survey along the Indian exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf of India are conducted for national benefits towards identifying ocean resources, Ocean related advisory services, navigation, etc. Assessment of living resources in the EEZ and deep ocean of India including mapping of the living resources has been undertaken for marine ecosystem with goal for Conservation and protection of Marine Biodiversity.
- The Ministry has been also monitoring the health of coastal waters of India including shoreline changes and marine ecosystems.

Outcome

- In the next five years (2021-26) this scheme would provide further comprehensive coverage through strengthening the ongoing activities towards delivering cutting edge technology applicable for marine domain, forecast and warning services to various coastal stake holders, understanding biodiversity towards conservation strategy for marine living organisms and understanding coastal processes.

Conclusion

- This continuation of the scheme would contribute significantly towards national policy on blue economy for effective and efficient use of the vast ocean resources in a Sustainable way.
- Efforts towards achieving United Nations sustainable Development Goal-14 to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources are being covered through the coastal research and marine biodiversity activities.
- Significant contribution to the national GDP is being made and to be continued through the ocean advisory services and technologies developed benefiting communities and several sectors working in the marine environment, particularly in the coastal states of India.

National Action Plan to Combat Anti-Microbial Resistance

Why in News

- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, organized a National Stakeholder workshop on the National Action Plan to combat Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR).

Background

- World Antimicrobial Awareness Week is held every year from November 18-24.
 - It aims to raise awareness of, and commitment to tackling the emergence of AMR.
- To address AMR, the World Health Organization spearheaded the development of a Global Action Plan on AMR. This was approved in 2015.
- In April 2017, India was amongst the first nations to have launched the National Action Plan for AMR for 2017 to 2021.

About the Workshop

- The workshop's technical sessions witnessed discussion on improving awareness and understanding of AMR through effective communication, education, and training,
 - a. Strengthening knowledge and evidence through surveillance.
 - b. Reducing the incidence of infection through effective infection prevention and control.
 - c. Optimizing the use of antimicrobial agents in health, animals, and food.
 - d. Promoting investments for AMR activities, research, and innovations, and strengthening India's leadership on AMR.

One Health framework

- To tackle the challenges of zoonotic diseases and Antimicrobial resistance, implementing the One Health framework is imminent and most urgent.

- Addressing this need, A **One Health Support Unit** has been established in the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying under the One Health framework comprising of domain experts across veterinary science, epidemiology, wildlife, disease diagnosis, laboratory assessor, data standards, and human health sectors.

Central Consumer Protection Authority

Why in News

- As part of celebrations of 75 years of Independence - 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has initiated a country-wide campaign to prevent sale of spurious and counterfeit goods that violate Quality Control Orders published by the Central Government.
- In this regard, CCPA has already issued directions to district collectors across the country to investigate unfair trade practices and violation of consumer rights concerning manufacture or sale of such goods.
 - Essential, daily use products which have been identified for the campaign are Helmets, Pressure Cooker and Cooking Gas Cylinders.
- CCPA has sought response from the e-commerce entities within 7 days from issuance of notice, failing which necessary action may be initiated against them under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

Brief Details

- CCPA has taken suo-moto cognizance against e-commerce entities found to be selling Pressure Cookers in violation to the Domestic Pressure Cooker (Quality Control) Order, 2020 issued by the Central Government under Section 16 (1) of the BIS Act, 2016 on 21st January 2020.
 - By the said Order, Domestic Pressure Cooker are mandated to conform to Indian Standard IS 2347: 2017 and bear the standard mark under a license from BIS with effect from 1st August 2020.

Background

- Under Section 2(10) the Consumer Protection Act, 2019**, "defect" means any fault, imperfection or shortcoming in the quality, quantity, potency, purity or standard which is required to be maintained by or under any law for the time being in force or under any contract, express or implied or as is claimed by the trader in any manner whatsoever in relation to any goods or product and the expression "defective" shall be construed accordingly.
 - Thus, Pressure Cookers which do not conform to the compulsory standards are liable to held 'defective' under the Act.
- Unfair Trade Practice** defined under Section 2(47) of the Act means and includes promoting the sale, use or supply of any goods by adopting any unfair method or unfair or deceptive practice by permitting the sale or supply of goods intended to be used, or are of a kind likely to be used by consumers, knowing or having reason to believe that the goods do not comply with the standards prescribed by the competent authority relating to performance, composition, contents, design, constructions, finishing or packaging as are necessary to prevent or reduce the risk of injury to the person using the goods.
 - Rule 4(2) of the Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020 specifies that no e-commerce entity shall adopt any unfair trade practice, whether the in course of business on its platform or otherwise.
 - Moreover, Section 17 of the BIS Act prohibits any person to manufacture, import, distribute, sell, hire, lease, store or exhibit for sale any such goods or article for which direction of compulsory use of Standard Mark has been published by the Central Government under Section 16(1).
 - Further, Section 29 (3) and (4), stipulate the penalty for contravention of Section 17 and designate it as a cognizable offence.

All India Survey on Domestic Workers

Why in News

- Union Minister for Labour and Employment, Shri Bhupender Yadav has recently flagged off the first ever All India Survey on Domestic workers being conducted by Labour Bureau, Chandigarh. Domestic workers (DWs) constitute a significant portion of total employment in the informal sector.

Background

- Domestic workers (DWs) constitute a significant portion of total employment in the informal sector. But there is a lack of adequate data on their conditions of work and other details.

- Hence, the survey is being conducted to fill this information gap. This is expected to help in data-driven policy and last-mile delivery of services.

Aim and Objectives

- The All India Survey on Domestic Workers is aimed to estimate the number and proportion of domestic workers at National and State level, percentage distribution of domestic workers with respect to Live-in/Live-out, formal/ Informal Employment, Migrant/Non-Migrant, their wages and other socio-economic characteristics.
- The survey will also provide the Household Estimates of Live-in/Live-out domestic workers and average number of domestic workers engaged by different types of households.
- The main objective are:
 - Estimate the number/proportion of DWs at National and State level.
 - Household Estimates of Live-in/ Live-out DWs.
 - Average number of DWs engaged by different types of households.

Brief Details

- The Domestic Worker Survey collects information on the following broad parameters:
 - Household Characteristics such as HH size, Religion, Social Group, Usual Monthly Consumption Expenditure, Nature of Dwelling unit.
 - Demographic Characteristics such as Name, Age, Relation to Head, Marital Status, General Education Level, Usual Principal Activity Status, Subsidiary Activity Status and Status of DWs.
 - In addition to this, it also collects information on DWs such as their Age of entry, Social Group, Migrant status, Vocational Training/Education, Number of HHs served by DW, activities performed by them, and number of days worked, Duration of work, Type of remuneration and its frequency, Type of contract, Distance travelled, Engagement as DW before and after COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on wages and job, living conditions and social security benefits received.
 - Information on Employer HHs is also collected such as their preferences of DW regarding Gender and marital status, mode of payment of wages, number of days worked, mode of engagement, whether DW services were availed during ii COVID-19 pandemic, medical support given to DWs.

Scope of the Survey

- All India States/UTs of India covered are 37 and Districts covered are 742
- Unit of Enumeration is Villages as per Census 2011 and Urban Blocks as per latest phase of UFS.
- At the all-India level, a total number of 12766 First Stage Units (FSUs) i.e., 6190 villages and 6576 UFS blocks will be covered in the survey.
- 1.5 Lakh Households i.e., the Ultimate Stage Units (USU) will be covered.
- The result of the All-India Survey on Domestic Workers is expected within a time-span of 1 year.



**UPSC CSE
PRELIMS TEST
SERIES
2022**

with 12 months subscription of
THE IAS GAZETTE

60 HIGH QUALITY TESTS

Online ₹7900 Offline ₹9999



Geographical Information System (GIS)

Why in News

- The Ministry of Rural Development has reached an important milestone with the completion of Geographical Information System (GIS) plans for 2 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) out of 2.69 lakh GPs under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA using remote sensing technology based on the ridge to valley approach.

Background

- GIS-based planning under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS is an initiative of the Ministry of Rural Development which helps the Gram Panchayat to ensure a scientific & holistic approach for planning at the Gram Panchayat level.
- It is an important tool to ensure participatory planning at the implementation level.

Initiatives taken

- The Ministry has provided detailed training on usage of GIS & RS (Remote Sensing) technology to Mahatma Gandhi NREGS functionaries of States/UTs through the initiative of the Ministry and NIRDPR (National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj).
- Thereafter, all the States/UTs prepared 4 GIS-based plans of GPs per block in FY 2020-21 as pilots, which was extended to all GP's after successful completion.

Impact

- Contributions of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS have enhanced significantly by using the GIS-Based Planning approach and impacts of which is visible at ground level.
- The development of quality assets at the Gram-Panchayat level has been taking place through proper planning and decision making.

Way Forward

- Mahatma Gandhi NREGS has always emphasized Natural Resource Management (NRM) based planning to enhance the livelihood and NRM resource base in rural areas.
- The systematic development of land, harnessing of rainwater following watershed principles (Ridge to Valley Approach) and creation of income-generating assets has become important aspect of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS works.
- The planning of works under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS are now carried out using advanced technologies.
- To further facilitate Gram Panchayat level planning of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS activities across India, Yuktdhara Geospatial Planning portal has been developed on Bhuvan Platform by National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA division MoRD.
- The Ministry is also working towards integrating climate data with the above data through a joint initiative with FCDO of the UK, known as CRISP-M, which will further enable the local communities to understand the impact of changing climate in terms of various geophysical parameters and make smart decisions on them.

Geographical Information System (GIS)

- The GIS is a computer-based tool for mapping and analysing the geographic terrain and offers scientific choices of development works suitable to the area.
- This technology integrates common database operations such as query and statistical analysis with the unique visualization and geographic analysis benefits offered by the maps.

Sydney Dialogue

Why in News

- Recently our PM addressed the Sydney Dialogue.

About Sydney Dialogue

- The annual Sydney Dialogue is convened by the *Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI)* — an independent, non-partisan think tank that produces expert and timely advice for Australian and global leaders.

- ASPI generates new ideas for policy makers, allowing them to make better-informed decisions and is one of the most authoritative and widely quoted contributors to public discussion of strategic policy issues in the Indo-Pacific region. ASPI was established by the Australian Government in 2001 and is supported by Australian and overseas government agencies, corporates and civil society groups.
- It is the world first summit for emerging, critical and cyber technologies.
- The Sydney Dialogue was officially announced by Australia's Foreign Minister, Senator the Hon Marise Payne in December 2020.
 - It was launched by Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison.
 - The inaugural summit was recently hosted virtually from Sydney, Australia on 17-19 November 2021.

Significance of Sydney Dialogue

- Emerging, critical and cyber technologies are having a material impact on our lives and work. They are reshaping our societies, economies and the very future of our planet.
- But state practice and the pace of technological development is significantly outstripping formal multilateral processes.
- There is a lack of consensus between the key stakeholders – governments, businesses, the tech sector and civil society – and a lack of spaces that bring them together to focus on solutions, cooperation and policy options.
- The main objective of this Dialogue is to fill this critical gap and push global discourse and policymaking into a new, more forward-leaning phase.

India's Role

- India's role in the Indo-Pacific region and in the growing digital world has been highlighted.
- Openness is an essential strength of democracy.
- Co-operation with the partners for shared prosperity and security.
- Digitisation is a tool for progress. Development of indigenous technological set up for 5G and 6G will be attractive areas of investment in India in the upcoming days.
- India is among the leading countries in the fields of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning.
- India also raised concern over the misuse of Crypto-currency and requested all democratic nations to work together towards preventing such misuse by expanding the purview of data protection norms.

PM Gati Shakti NMP

Why in News

- Government of India has recently constituted a 20-member Empowered Group of Secretaries (EGoS), which will be a monitoring mechanism for the development and implementation of the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan (NMP).
 - The Cabinet Secretary will be its Chairperson.
 - Head of Logistics Division will be the Member, Convenor. The Logistics Division will act as Secretariat to the Empowered Group of Secretaries for its Terms of Reference (ToRs).
 - The EGoS can co-opt any other Secretary or Secretaries as per requirement.

Terms of Reference

- Review and monitor implementation of the Plan to ascertain the logistics efficiency.
- Adopt framework and norms for undertaking any amendments in the existing Plan.
- Coordinate for any changes in the projects already included in the Plan, within the prescribed framework and norms.
- To set out a procedure and a definitive timeframe for synchronisation of various activities for construction of roads, rail, etc. along with all utility services in an area-based approach for development of infrastructure on pilot basis;
- Align various initiatives on development of a common integrated portal which serves the needs of all stakeholders;
- The EGoS will also look at the interventions required to meet the demand side, in efficiently transporting bulk goods based on the requirements of various Ministries like Steel, Coal, and Fertilizer etc.

About PM Gati Shakti-National Master Plan

- Prime Minister has launched this Plan for Multi-modal Connectivity, essentially a digital platform, to bring 16 Ministries including Railways and Roadways together for integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure connectivity projects.
- The multi-modal connectivity will provide integrated and seamless connectivity for movement of people, goods and services from one mode of transport to another.
- It will facilitate the last mile connectivity of infrastructure and also reduce travel time for people.

Objectives

- It will incorporate the infrastructure schemes of various Ministries and State Governments like Bharatmala, Sagarmala, inland waterways, dry/land ports, UDAN etc.
- Economic Zones like textile clusters, pharmaceutical clusters, defence corridors, electronic parks, industrial corridors, fishing clusters, agri zones will be covered to improve connectivity & make Indian businesses more competitive.
- It will also leverage technology extensively including spatial planning tools with ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) imagery developed by BiSAG-N (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics).

Pillars of PM Gati Shakti

- a. Comprehensiveness:** It will include all the existing and planned initiatives of various Ministries and Departments with one centralized portal.
- b. Prioritization:** Through this, different Departments will be able to prioritize their projects through cross-sectoral interactions.
- c. Optimization:** The National Master Plan will assist different ministries in planning for projects after identification of critical gaps.
- d. Synchronization**
- e. Analytical:** The plan will provide the entire data at one place with GIS based spatial planning and analytical tools having 200+ layers, enabling better visibility to the executing agency.
- f. Dynamic:** All Ministries and Departments will now be able to visualize, review and monitor the progress of cross-sectoral projects, through the GIS platform, as the satellite imagery will give on-ground progress periodically and progress of the projects will be updated on a regular basis on the portal.

Bhasha Sangam Initiative

Why in News

- Union Education Minister has recently launched Bhasha Sangam initiative for schools, Bhasha Sangam Mobile App and Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Mobile Quiz (EBSB).

Background

- The main objective behind this initiative is to commemorate the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, which is celebrated on October 31 every year to mark the birth anniversary of Shri Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

About the Initiative

- Bhasha Sangam is an initiative of the Ministry of Education under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, to teach basic sentences of everyday usage in 22 Indian languages.
- The idea is that people should acquire basic conversational skills in an Indian language other than their mother tongue.

Bhasha Sangam Initiative for schools

- It is developed by NCERT.
- Through this programme of Bhasha Sangam learners in school will be able to get acquainted with all the languages-their scripts, pronunciation

Bhasha Sangam Mobile App

- This is an initiative of DoHE, in collaboration with MyGov. The App has been developed by a start-up Multibhashi, selected by myGov through a competition.
- The App initially has 100 sentences of every day usage in 22 Indian languages.
- A learner will pass through stages on the basis of testing. There is also a detailed testing in the end with generation of digital certificate.

About EBSB Quiz App

- It is a Mobile App based quiz with over 10,000 questions on states of India developed by Nazara Technologies through the Innovation Cell of this Ministry.
- EBSB Quiz game is targeted toward children and youngsters of Bharat for helping them learn more about our different regions, states, culture, national Heroes, monuments, traditions, tourist locations, languages, geography, history, topography.

Draft Mediation Bill

Why in News

- Recently, the Ministry of Law and Justice has released a draft of the Mediation Bill, 2021 for public comments and consultation.
 - The bill aims to promote, encourage and facilitate mediation in the country, particularly institutional mediation.

Background

- Government of India has been taking various policy initiatives for promotion and strengthening of *Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)* mechanisms through amendment in existing laws and by enactments, for facilitating quick disposal of disputes, outside of traditional court systems.
- As a continuation of the exercise, bringing a standalone law on Mediation is under consideration.

About The Bill

- The draft bill on Mediation establishes a consolidated framework bringing the existing laws on mediation from various enactments under an umbrella legislation.
- The bill considers the international practice of referring to 'conciliation' and 'mediation' as interchangeable words.
- The Bill takes into contemplation the international practice of using the terms 'conciliation' and 'mediation' interchangeably.
- It has also become expedient to enact a law in mediation on issues of domestic and international mediation as India is a signatory to the Singapore Convention on Mediation.
- *It proposes pre-litigation mediation while also protecting the litigants' right to approach the courts in the event an urgent relief is required.*

Features of the Bill

1. The draft Bill proposes for pre-litigation mediation and at the same time safeguards the interest of the litigants to approach the competent adjudicatory forums/courts in case an urgent relief is sought.
2. The successful outcome of mediation in the form of *Mediation Settlement Agreement (MSA)* has been made enforceable by law. Since the Mediation Settlement Agreement is out of the consensual agreement between the parties, the challenge to the same has been permitted on limited grounds.
3. The mediation process protects the confidentiality of the mediation undertaken and provides for immunity in certain cases against its disclosure.
4. *The registration of Mediation Settlement Agreement has also been provided for with State/District/Taluk Legal Authorities within 90 days to ensure maintenance of authenticated records of the settlement so arrived.*
5. Provides for **establishment of the Mediation Council of India**.
6. Provides for community mediation.

Expected Outcome

- This is a draft bill with the objective to promote, encourage and facilitate mediation especially institutional mediation for the following:
 - a. Resolution of disputes (commercial and otherwise).
 - b. Enforce domestic and international mediation settlement agreements.
 - c. Provide for a body for registration of mediators
 - d. To encourage community mediation.
 - e. To make online mediation as an acceptable and cost effective process and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto has been prepared.

National Achievement Survey 2021

Why in News

- The National Achievement Survey 2021, was successfully conducted today across all 36 states and UTs of the country.
 - As per initial estimates received from 24 states/UTs nearly 96% of the sampled schools and nearly 92% of the targeted sampled children, of classes 3, 5, 8 and 10 participated in the survey.
 - The National Achievement Survey (NAS) is a process of gathering information in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences.
- This process will ultimately culminate to improve the subsequent students' learning and development, through systemic interventions.
- The Achievement Survey was conducted in different mediums of instruction as available in the sampled schools.

Background

- NAS 2021 is the first achievement survey after release of National Education Policy 2020 (NEP).
- The assessment would be used to benchmark students' learning against criteria such as process skills and learning outcomes.
- NAS 2021 will infuse the competency-based assessment system over the content and memory-based assessment as envisaged by NEP 2020.

About NAS

- NAS is a scientifically designed achievement survey. There are 3 phases of NAS exercise, namely instrument development, sampling design and actual administration of the test.
- Grade-wise subject specific Learning Outcomes have been identified, which have been assessed through NAS. Instruments have been developed in such a way that it can map the specific Learning Outcomes.
- NCERT, being nodal academic body has done the instrument development, testing, finalization of the test items.
- Being a sample-based survey, sampling design becomes crucial to make the data more representative and authentic. Sampling-Design has been done in a scientific manner as per international standards.
- Actual Administration of the test in the sampled schools was conducted by CBSE in collaboration with states and UTs, to maintain highest levels of reliability and impartiality, being a third party assessment agency external to the school education department.
- Besides student achievement test, Pupil Questionnaire, Teachers Questionnaire and School Questionnaire were also obtained to understand the various settings and perspective of students, teachers and schools.
- This will provide valuable information regarding back ground, teacher training, rural-urban, effectiveness of online education etc. to comprehend the education system in a comprehensive manner.

Way Forward

- The results of NAS 2021 will be prepared in the form of District Report Cards, State/UT reports and National report.
- NAS will enable States and the Union Territories to identify gaps in learning outcomes and take remedial steps.
- It will also help in the capacity building for teachers and officials involved in the delivery of education in the country.
- The result from the assessment would also provide a rich repository of evidences and data points furthering the scope of research and development.

Green Steel

Why in News

- Enhancing Steel intensity in Rural segment of the society and move towards “Green Steel” or “Low Carbon Steel” manufacturing will make India a Manufacturing Hub: said Minister of State for Steel and Rural Development, Govt. of India at the Inaugural Session of the Global Steel Summit 2021 organised by CII in association with Ministry of Steel.

Background

- According to the vision of *National Steel Policy 2017* to increase steel production capacity in India to 300 million tonnes by 2030-31, per capita steel consumption to 160 KG, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, many targets have been set.
 - For this Ministry of Steel has organized several seminars, conferences, webinars with stakeholders such as Ministry of Railways, Petroleum, Urban Development, Rural Development to maintain and enhance the continuity of demand.
 - Steel production will increase, and capacity expansion will happen only when demand increases.
- Government has set a target of outlay of more than 111 lakh crores in *National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) by 2024-25*.
 - It will increase the demand for steel as well as reduce the cost of production of steel.
 - The slurry pipeline will have an outlay of more than 25,000 crores.
 - This will make the transportation of iron ore pollution free and cheap.

Steel Sector and Carbon Emission

- The iron and steel sector are the largest single energy consumer and CO₂ emitter in the industrial sector in India and hence mitigating climate change is the need of the hour for the steel industry to move towards “Green Steel” or “Low Carbon Steel” manufacturing in India.
- The Government is working on schemes like Coal Gasification, National Hydrogen Mission to reduce the dependence of steel industry on coke.
- This will not only reduce the dependence of the steel industry on coke but will also help in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- It is possible for steel industry to support and meet the 1.5°C goal as set out in Paris in 2015.

Pathway

This will happen in three phases.

- Phase 1 will initially need to rely on improved efficiency in making and using steel.
- Phase two, accelerating towards the end of this decade, will benefit from growing availability of scrap in China and other developing economies.
 - This will allow for a larger portion of global production to rely on recycled scrap and so reduce the average CO₂ intensity in the industry.
- Phase 3, focus will be on using hydrogen and new production methods to reduce the CO₂ intensity of industry further.



IAS GYAN
PREDICT THE UNPREDICTABLE

UPSC CSE MAINS TEST SERIES
2022 & 2023

APTI PLUS
Academy for Civil Services Pvt. Ltd.

16 High Quality Tests

15 Hrs. Online Classes on Essay and Case Studies (Ethics)

06 One to One Interactive Sessions with our Evaluators

₹18,000

Way Forward

- Achieving the roadmap of carbon neutrality by 2050, we need to adopt multi-track approach to develop super-innovative technologies, focusing on carbon recycling blast furnace + CCU and hydrogen iron making (direct reduction) and maximize utilization of industry-leading electric arc furnace technology. He further emphasised the need to accelerate research and development for early establishment of new technologies
- With the steel industry increasing capacities and capabilities to meet projected demands, most steels – whether for commodity applications or high-end applications – are domestically available.
 - a. With the recently announced PLI scheme, few gaps, which are mainly in speciality steel, are expected to be closed in few years.
 - b. Enhanced availability of all types of steel shall open up new downstream and collateral industrial opportunities.
- India is already among the top few countries in terms of renewable energy capacities and expanding at a rapid pace.
- Businesses across the globe will have the opportunity to balance their global carbon footprints through investments in India.

Comprehensive Policy Framework for promotion of Energy Storage in the Power Sector

Why in News

- Union Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy chaired a meeting with senior officials from Central Government, Central PSUs, Renewable Energy Developers, PSP Developers and Battery Manufacturers for discussion on the '*Report on comprehensive Policy Framework for promotion of Energy Storage in the Power Sector*'.

Objective

- This framework is adopted to ensure that no energy is lost and for that we need to be in a position to store all the energy, which is going to be surplus at any point of time.

Key Highlights

- Some Storage needs to be added with the Generation in order to ensure round the clock Renewable Energy.
- Minister directed to prepare separate Guidelines on treatment of Energy Storage and Resource Adequacy.
- To meet the target of 500 GW Renewable Energy by 2030, the Minister directed to work out the requirement of Storage capacity year wise in keeping with the upcoming addition of Solar & Wind projects.
- Regarding ancillary services, Minister emphasized on the need to have adequate energy reserve, which can be utilized at a moment's notice to support our power system and Grid operation.
- The Minister directed all Hydro CPSUs and Private industries to survey and identify Pump Hydro sites in the vicinity of existing HEPs.

GENERAL STUDIES PAPER III

Green Energy Collaboration

Why in News

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh recently held an online meeting with the United Kingdom (UK) Science Minister, George Freeman, wherein the two discussed Green Energy collaboration between the two countries as well as host of other issues of mutual interest.

About the Collaboration

- UK has emerged as India's second largest international research and innovation partner. The India-UK Science & Technology (S&T) collaboration has been growing at a rapid pace and the joint research programme has gone from an almost zero base to close to £300-400 million now.

- India UK S & T partnership covers all aspect of Research and Innovation from discovery to development to translation

Background

- Dwelling on the issue of India's net zero journey, energy efficiency and renewable energy are central pillars, where India has already taken lead by various initiatives like India Solar Alliance, Clean energy mission etc.
- Four technology value chains contribute about half of the cumulative CO2 savings:
 - Technologies to widely electrify end-use sectors (such as advanced batteries).
 - Carbon capture, Utilisation and storage (CCUS).
 - Hydrogen and hydrogen-related fuels.
 - Bio-energy.
- During the last India UK virtual summit held during May 2021, Prime Ministers from both countries emphasized their shared commitment to an enhanced partnership in science, education, research and innovation and look forward to the next ministerial Science and Innovation Council (SIC).
- Newton Bhabha MoU** provided an opportunity to take India UK S&T cooperation to the next level in various research areas, for example energy security, food and agriculture, water, health, climate change, environmental studies as well as social and cultural changes that are taking place in India.

Objectives of the Collaboration

- To increase cooperation between India and the UK in the areas of clean and green energies.
- Promote the use of advanced batteries.
- Use of carbon capture method to reduce air pollution and infusing better technology in this area.
- Production of hydrogen-related fuels.
- Encourage the affordability of biomaterials, improvement of livestock research.

Important Highlights of Discussion

- India will join G20 troika in few days from 1st December this year and will hold the G20 presidency from December 1, next year.
 - India also plans to convene the G20 leaders' summit in 2023 for the first time.
- The S20 group (Science track of G-20) has the most important responsibility to engage with all stake holders in the spirit of collective foresight and develop science-based solutions to counter the multitude of challenges faced by the humanity.
- India supports the **"ONE HEALTH"** approach and it has proposed *"Global Equitability for Health Infrastructure Development"* to counter future challenges like current pandemic" as the theme for the next S-20 Summit to be held in India.

Initiatives taken by the Government

- In the recent past, Govt. of India has launched several flagship initiatives such as :
 - National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems (ICPS).
 - Quantum Computing and Communication.
 - National Mission on Supercomputing, Deep Ocean Mission.
 - Electric Mobility.
 - Green hydrogen etc.
- India is also on the way to announce its new policy, which revolves around the core principles of being decentralized, evidence informed, bottom-up, experts-driven, and inclusive.

Way forward

- The present Government has laid emphasis on promoting the value chain of innovation, entrepreneurship and IP generation.
- The Indian innovation system is more purpose driven rather than process driven with focus on affordability and accessibility.
- There is great need to enhance industry-led collaborations or industry participation both at the national as well as international levels to ensure application oriented technologies for solving societal needs and spur innovation.

Science and Innovation Council (SIC)

- It is the apex body to review overall bilateral scientific cooperation (except strategic sector) between two countries and it is held once in two years alternatively in India and the UK. SIC reviews bilateral scientific collaboration, not only of our DST, DBT, MOES, and CSIR but also of DAE, ICMR, ICAR, Ministry of Education, and ICSSR with counterpart UK agencies.
- Last SIC meeting was held at New Delhi on 26th July 2018.

Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative

Why in News

- National e-Governance Division under the Ministry of Electronics and IT is conducting a six-day Deep Dive Training program for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and frontline IT officials from various Ministries & Departments, Government & Semi-Government organisations from Central and State Governments, PSUs, banks, among others.
- Experts from both Government and private sector are attending the training program focused on topics like ISMS Standards, Mobile Security, Cyber Security products in India, data security, identity protection, cryptography, etc.

Background

- It is aimed at creating awareness around cyber security and develop an empowered and strong cyber ecosystem in Government organisations in India.
- India is ranked among top 10 countries, out of 182, in cyber security posture for the year 2020, jumping from the 47th position in the year 2018 to 10th position in 2020.
 - This is a significant achievement with respect to the cyber preparedness in India.

Details of the Programme

- The Deep Dive Training program under the Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative is aimed to prepare the CISOs and frontline IT officials to face challenges of cyber security and handle cyber crisis.
- This type of training empowers them to secure their organisations from cyber threats and for smooth delivery of e-Gov. services and functioning of production units.
- NeGD has been consistently organising such workshops with the primary goal of promoting a safe digital space among citizens.

About the Initiative

- The Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative was launched in January 2018 by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- It is the first public-private partnership of its kind that leverages the expertise of the IT industry in cyber security along with MeitY's organisations such as CDAC, CERT-In, NIC and STQC as the knowledge partners in this training program.

Digital Banks

Why in news

- NITI Aayog has recently released a Discussion Paper titled "Digital Banks: A Proposal for Licensing & Regulatory Regime for India" seeking comments till 31.12.2021.
- The Discussion Paper has been prepared by NITI Aayog, in consultation with eminent experts in the field of finance, technology and law and based on inter-ministerial consultations.

About the Paper

- The Discussion Paper makes a case, and offers a template and roadmap for a Digital Bank licensing and regulatory regime for India.

- The Discussion Paper also recommends regulatory innovations such as Digital Bank license that hold the promise of solving for as well as mitigating the financial deepening challenges faced.
- The Paper starts by defining the concept of “Digital Bank” and points out the promise it holds while mapping the prevalent business models.
- It goes on to highlight the challenges presented by the “partnership model” of neo-banking that has emerged in India as a function of regulatory vacuum and absence of a Digital Bank license.

Context

- India has made rapid strides towards enabling financial inclusion catalysed by PMJDY and India stack.
 - However, credit penetration remains a public policy challenge, especially for the nation’s 63 million odd MSMEs that contribute approx.
 - 30 % to the Gross Domestic Product, about 45% to manufacturing output, more than 40% of exports, while creating employment for a significant section of the population, which in terms of volume stands next to agricultural sector.
 - This is hindering the development of a conducive business environment for expansion of the MSME sector.
- Over the past few years, with the help of unprecedented level of technology-led digitization and digital disruption heralded by Jan-Dan-Aadhar-Mobile (JAM) trinity, biometric Aadhar, financial inclusion has become a viable reality for the citizens of India.
- This has been furthered by the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) which has witnessed extraordinary adoption.
 - UPI recorded over 4.2 billion transactions worth over ₹ 7.7 trillion in just October 2021.
- A “whole of India approach” towards financial inclusion has also resulted in Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) through apps such as PM-KISAN and extending microcredit facility to street vendors through PM-SVANIDHI apps.
- In parallel, India has also taken steps towards operationalizing its own version of “Open banking” through the Account Aggregator (“AA”) regulatory framework enacted by the RBI.
 - Once commercially deployed, the AA framework is envisaged to catalyse credit deepening among groups that have hitherto been under-served.

Issues and Challenges

- The success that India has witnessed on the retail payments and credit front, has failed to replicate when it comes to payments and credit needs of its micro small and medium businesses.
- The current credit gap and the business and policy constraints reveal a need for leveraging technology effectively to cater to the needs of this segment and bring them further within the formal financial fold.

Summary of Reforms Proposed

- In terms of the methodology for licensing and regulatory template offered by NITI Aayog, the Paper constructs an equal-weighted “Digital Bank Regulatory Index” comprising of 4 factors:
 - Entry barriers.
 - Competition.
 - Business Restrictions.
 - Technological Neutrality.
- It then maps the elements of these indices against the 5 benchmark jurisdictions of Singapore, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, Malaysia, Australia and South Korea.
- The Paper also recommends a two-stage approach with a Digital Business Bank license to begin with a suggestion for Digital (Universal) Bank license after policymakers and regulators have gained experience from the former. Focus on avoiding any regulatory or policy arbitrage and giving a level playing field is an important recommendation.
- Moreover, even with the Digital Business Bank license, it recommends a carefully calibrated approach comprising of following steps:
 - Issue of a restricted Digital Business Bank license (to a given applicant) (the license will be restricted in terms of volume/ value of customers serviced and the like).
 - Issue of a “full-stack” Digital Business Bank license (contingent on satisfactory performance of the licensee in the regulatory sandbox including saliently, prudential and technological risk management).

OJ 287

Why in News

- Indian Astronomers have found an active galaxy in a very bright state with 10 times more X-ray emission than normal, equivalent to more than 10 trillion Sun, and located 5 billion light-years away that could help probe how particles behave under intense gravity and acceleration to the speed of light.
- It could help study the role of strong gravity and acceleration of matter in the formation, interaction, and evolution of galaxies in the early universe.

Background

- Astronomers at Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Govt. of India, have been monitoring one such black hole system named OJ 287 since 2015.
- This source shows a repeated optical brightness enhancement almost every 12 years.
 - The repeated optical enhancement makes OJ 287 very intriguing as this class of sources does not show any repeating features in flux variations.
 - The repeated optical enhancement made the researchers believe that the system hosts a binary black hole.
- The research published in '*The Astrophysical Journal*' tracked the details of changes in optical to the X-ray emission spectrum of the source with time from 2017 to 2020 – after the 2nd brightest X-ray flare of the source.
 - It revealed how the source gradually started to change its spectral behaviour from mid-2018 to the new spectral state in 2020.

Super Massive Black Hole (SMBH)

- Every galaxy in the Universe is believed to host a **Super Massive Black Hole (SMBH)** at its centre.
 - In some galaxies, the black hole is actively devouring a large amount of material and shooting a jet of plasma almost at the speed of light towards us. These are called **Blazars**.
- OJ 287** belongs to a class of blazars known as BL Lacertae objects which show very rapid and large amplitude flux variations but barely discernible emission line features.
 - This class of sources emit in the whole electromagnetic spectrum, a rather uncommon phenomenon which requires extreme physical conditions.
- Hence a study of such sources tells us about the behaviour of matter in an extreme gravitational field where it is difficult for light also to escape from the vicinity of the black hole.

Conclusion

- Such significant changes in the spectral state of blazars are very rare, and so are the binary SMBH systems in the universe.
- Multi-wavelength studies of such sources can establish the role of strong gravity and acceleration of particles to the speed of light in the formation of the most energetic jets in the universe, and the formation, interaction, and evolution of galaxies in the early universe.

Glacial-Tectonic Interaction

Why in News

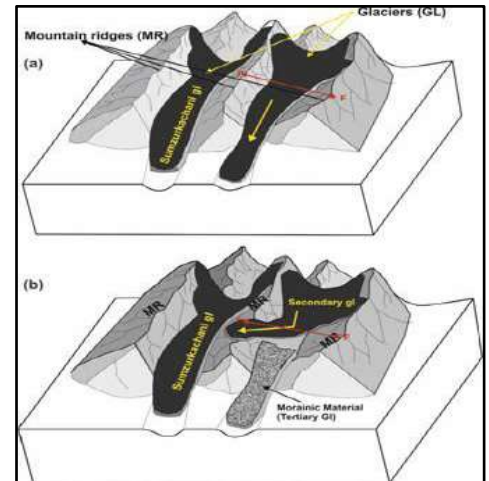
- Indian researchers studying an unnamed glacier in one of the less explored region in the upper Kali Ganga valley, Pithoragarh district, Uttarakhand, India, have reported that the glacier had abruptly changed its main course.
- It is for the first time that such change in course has been reported from a Himalayan glacier, and the researchers have attributed this to the accumulated influence of both climate and tectonics.

Background

- The recent disaster in Rishiganga is a latest example which suggests that the rock mass on which the glacier was sitting gradually became fragile (due to weathering, percolation of melt water in joints, crevasses, freezing and thawing, snowfall, overloading, and gradually operating tectonic forces forcing rocks to mechanical disintegration) with due course of time and detached from the source rock.

About the Study

- A team of scientists from *Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG)*, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India, found that the unnamed NE moving glacier had been abruptly truncated and forced to move towards SE.
- Based on remote sensing and an old survey map, the study assessed that the glacier had been affected by active fault and climate change.
- Tectonic activity and change in climatic conditions had changed the course and morphology of this glacier.
- An active fault produced a fault scarp that measures about 250 m in height with a northerly dip. The fault trace is 6.2 km in length and trends towards NW-SE.
- This study based on the tectonically sculptured unique glacier landform was published in the '*Geoscience Journal*'.



Hypothetical figure based on our finding depicting the past and present scenario of the valley.

(a) Past scenario.

(b) Present scenario.

Observations

- The WIHG team observed that the 5 km long unnamed glacier, which covered around 4 km² area in *Kuthi Yankti valley (Tributary of Kali River)*, has abruptly changed its main course.
- It moved, truncated, and ultimately merged with the adjacent glacier named *Sumzurkchanki* as a result of tectonic forcing during the time between Last Glacial Maxima (19-24 ka) and Holocene.
- It is one of the unique behaviours of the glacier, and no such observation has so far been reported on this type of glacier kinematics.

Indications

- The study indicates that climate is not the only factor that triggers disasters in the Himalaya, which is an active mountain range, but tectonics also plays an important role in glacial catchments.
- The abnormal behaviour of this unnamed glacier clearly suggests that not only is climate a controlling factor, but tectonics also plays an important role in glacial catchments.
- It clearly suggests that the Himalaya is an active mountain range and highly fragile where tectonics and climate play a critical role.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Why in News

- A group of Indian researchers have developed a compound called "6BIO" that can provide a better method to treat Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- They have determined the potency of the compound in a pre-clinical mice model.
- This is the first compound that has been proved in pre-clinical evaluation to have the potential for improving daily activities like learning and recollecting new tasks in patients with ASD/ Intellectual disability (ID).

Background

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is one of the major issues causing a tremendous burden to our society.
 - Yet, it does not have an appropriate pharmacological or genetic method to treat ASD/ID.
- Current therapeutics to treat ASD aims to alleviate symptoms such as epileptic seizures or sleep issues but not to treat the multiple problems of ASD/ID.
 - A major challenge in finding better therapeutics to treat ASD is the potency of the drug to help the patients to perform their daily activities with efficiency close to that of a healthy person.
 - Achieving this is particularly difficult after a certain age, especially from the mid-childhood stages.

Previous efforts

- Previous studies have attributed disruption in optimal brain development, mainly neuronal connections, during the early stage of development (i.e., babies/childhood) as one of the causes of ASD/ID.
- Due to the altered brain development, information processing becomes aberrant and understanding simple tasks becomes exceptionally challenging for patients with ASD/ID.

Modification in the present system

- Using electrophysiology, which helps understand how neurons communicate, and behaviour experiments, which indicates the overall brain function, the JNCASR team has shown that 6BIO can restore the information processing in the pre-clinical mouse model.
- Thus, 6BIO has a strong potential for therapeutics to treat ASD/ID.
- All the behaviour and electrophysiology work was performed in Dr James Clement's lab at JNCASR.

Mission 500 GW by 2030

Why in News

- Under the guidance of Union Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy, the Ministry of Power and New & Renewable Energy have issued revised guidelines providing for thermal generation companies to set up renewable energy generation capacity either by themselves through developers by open bids and supplying it to the consumers under the existing PPAs.

Reason

- As the cost of renewable energy is less than the cost of Thermal energy, the gains from the bundling of renewable energy with thermal will be shared between the generator and Distribution companies/other procurers on a 50:50 basis.
- As the renewable energy will be balanced with thermal energy, therefore, the DISCOMs will now not need to acquire any separate capacity for balancing of renewable energy.

Impact

- This will enable the replacement of fossil fuel based energy by renewable energy under the existing PPAs.
- This is a very significant step towards achieving the goal of 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030.
- The distribution companies will be able to count the renewable energy supplied under the scheme towards their renewable purchase obligation and this will be without the financial burden of separate PPA.

Way Forward

- This step by the Central Government will lead to a faster energy transition and will be beneficial for both the Generators and the Distribution Companies.

Best Tourism Village

Why in News

- The Pochampally Village in Telangana State has been selected as one of the best Tourism Villages by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).
- The prestigious award will be given on the occasion of the 24th session of the UNWTO General Assembly on 2nd December 2021 in Madrid, Spain.

Background

- The Ministry of Tourism recommended three villages for the UNWTO Best Tourism Village entry from India.
 - These were Kongthong in Meghalaya, Ladhpura Khas, Madhya Pradesh and Pochampally in Telangana.

About the Award

- The Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO Pilot initiative aims to award those villages which are outstanding examples of rural destinations and showcase good practices in line with its specified nine evaluation areas.
 - It also aims to support villages to enhance their rural tourism potential through training and access to opportunities for improvement.

About Pochampally

- Pochampally, 50 Kms from Hyderabad, is a town in Nalgonda district of Telangana and is often referred to as the Silk City of India for the exquisite sarees that are woven through a unique style called Ikat.
 - This style, Pochampally Ikat, received a Geographical Indicator (GI Status) in 2004.
 - Ikat is a Malaysian, Indonesian word which means "Tie and Dye".
- Ikat involves the process of wrapping (or tying) and dyeing sections of bundled yarn to a predetermined colour pattern before they are woven.
 - The dye penetrates into exposed sections while the wrapped section remains undyed.
 - This pattern formed by the yarn in this process is woven into fabric.
- Pochampally is also known as Bhoodan Pochampally to commemorate the Bhoodan Movement that was launched by Acharya Vinobha Bhave from this village on April 18th, 1951.
 - Currently a two room Vinobha Bhave Mandir exists within the village which was earlier the place where Vinobha Bhave resided during his visit to the village.

Expedition to Antarctica

Why in News

- India has successfully launched the 41st Scientific Expedition to Antarctica with the arrival of the first batch of its contingent at the southern white continent.
 - The first batch comprising of 23 scientists and support staff reached the Indian Antarctic station Maitri on last week.
 - Four more batches shall be landing in Antarctica by air using DROMLAN facility and onboard chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasiliy Golovnin by mid-January 2022.

Background

- The Indian Antarctic program, which began in 1981, has completed 40 scientific expeditions, and built three permanent research base stations in Antarctica, named *Dakshin Gangotri* (1983), *Maitri* (1988) and *Bharati* (2012).
 - As of today, Maitri and Bharati are fully operational.
- The *National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)*, Goa – an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences – manages the entire Indian Antarctic program.

Brief Details of the Expedition

- The 41st expedition has two major programs.
 - a. The first program encompasses geological exploration of the Amery ice shelf at Bharati station.
 - This will help explore the link between India and Antarctica in the past.
 - b. The second program involves reconnaissance surveys and preparatory work for drilling of 500 meters of ice core near Maitri.
 - It will help in improving the understanding of Antarctic climate, westerly winds, and sea-ice and greenhouse gases from a single climate archive for past 10,000 years.
 - The ice core drilling will be done in collaboration with the British Antarctic Survey and the Norwegian Polar Institute.
 - In addition to accomplishing scientific programs, it will replenish the annual supplies of food, fuel, provisions, and spares for operations and maintenance of life support systems at Maitri and Bharati.

Way Forward

- As India is committed to maintaining the continent of Antarctica free of COVID-19 and the highest standards of safety, the Indian contingent has reached Antarctica following a strict medical examination at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi; training for snow-ice acclimatization and survival at the Mountaineering and Skiing Institute, ITBP Auli, Uttarakhand; and a stringent sanitary protocol including a 14 days quarantine at Cape Town, South Africa.

Adverse Air Quality Scenario in Delhi-NCR

Why in News

- The *Commission for Air Quality Management* in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) convened a crucial meeting on an emergent basis today in wake of deteriorating air quality of the Delhi-NCR region.
- Apart from the order issued on 13.11.2021 after the 8th meeting of the Sub-Committee for GRAP, detailing various air pollution preventive measures and mitigation actions that need to be undertaken by the various agencies concerned across Delhi-NCR, the GRAP order has also advised States and concerned agencies to be in complete readiness for implementing 'Emergency Measures' as listed under Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).

Background

- The adverse air quality scenario in Delhi-NCR as a combined result of paddy stubble burning, vehicular pollution, post-Diwali pollution, dip in temperature and other local factors.
- It was also greatly impacted by a dust storm moving in from the South-Westerly directions of the Thar desert which brought in huge quantities of dust that further amplified the PM2.5 / PM10 levels significantly.
- Considering all different aspects causing a spike in the air pollution levels, the Commission during the meeting reiterated that the actions recommended by the orders of the Sub-Committee, shall be strictly implemented by the States.

Findings

- The Commission has also identified 5 different areas contributing to the prevailing adverse air quality of Delhi-NCR that need better focus with intensified efforts by the concerned agencies of the State Governments of National Capital Region (NCR) and GNCTD.
- These areas are:
 - a. Control of paddy stubble burning incidences.
 - b. Control of dust from Construction and Demolition (C&D) activities.
 - c. Control of dust from roads and open areas.
 - d. Vehicular Pollution.
 - e. Industrial Pollution.

Initiatives taken by CAQM

- CAQM has pulled out all the stops in the battle against air pollution.
 - The Commission, from time to time, has been advising various policy initiatives and actions directed towards improvement of air quality in the region.
 - From issuing 43 Directions and 7 Advisories to regularly holding meetings with the concerned departments of the State Governments and other concerned agencies of NCR, CAQM has been pro-actively taking stock of efforts taken by the respective states towards abatement of air pollution.
- CAQM is of the view that there is a vital need for regular assessments by senior level management in the State Governments and the agencies concerned so as to be well aware of the visible impact of the efforts initiated on-ground towards improvement of air quality in Delhi-NCR.
- Further, the State Governments and District Administrations in the NCR States were also suggested to issue a Citizen Charter / Advisory for general public including various steps that need to be taken during various stages/ categories of the GRAP Action Plan.
- The Commission also reiterated the need for extra vigilance and concerted measures in various sectors that immediately and adversely impact the air quality.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Topic	Details
India and UK Green Energy collaboration	The India-UK Science & Technology (S&T) collaboration has been growing at a rapid pace and the joint research programme has gone from an almost zero base to close to £300-400 million now
India and Bangladesh	<p>Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Seminar titled "India-Bangladesh: Fifty Years of Friendship " was organised by the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) at the India International Centre (IIC), on 24 November 2021 to commemorate. The Former COAS, being one of the war veteran of the 1971 war, recalled the days and encouraged the need to train the Armed Forces with the state-of-art technology.
INDIA - INDONESIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India and Indonesia have been carrying out Coordinated Patrols (CORPAT) along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) twice in a year since 2002, with an aim of keeping this vital part of the Indian Ocean Region safe and secure for commercial shipping, international trade and conduct of legitimate maritime activities. As part of Government of India's vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with the countries in the Indian Ocean Region.
India, Singapore and Thailand Exercise SITMEX – 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian Naval Ship (INS) Karmuk, an indigenously built Missile Corvette is participating in the 3rd edition of India, Singapore and Thailand Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX – 21, from 15 to 16 Nov 21 in Andaman Sea. SITMEX is being conducted annually since 2019. The maiden edition of SITMEX was hosted by IN off Port Blair in September 2019. The 2021 edition of the exercise is being hosted by RTN in Andaman Sea.
India-Thailand	The 32nd edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy is being conducted from 12 – 14 November 2021.

SHORT LINERS

- ONE HEALTH :** 'One Health' is an WHO affiliated approach to designing and implementing programmes, policies, legislation and research in which multiple sectors communicate and work together to achieve better public health outcomes.

 - The areas of work in which a One Health approach is particularly relevant include food safety, the control of zoonoses (diseases that can spread between animals and humans, such as flu, rabies and Rift Valley Fever), and combatting antibiotic resistance (when bacteria change after being exposed to antibiotics and become more difficult to treat).
- National Milk Day:** The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying has recently celebrated "National Milk Day" to commemorate the birth centenary of Dr. Verghese Kurien (Milk Man of India) on 26.11.2021.

 - Dr. Verghese Kurien, known as the "Father of the White Revolution" in India, was a social entrepreneur.
 - His "billion-litre idea", Operation Flood, made dairy farming India's largest self-sustaining industry and the largest rural employment sector providing a third of all rural income.
 - It made India the world's largest milk producer, doubled the milk available for each person, and increased milk output four-fold in 30 years.

3. **GopalRatna Award**– It is one of the highest National Awards in the field of livestock and dairy sector, with an objective to encourage all individuals and Dairy cooperative societies / Milk Producer Company / Dairy farmers Producers Organizations working in this sector, are conferred in three categories, namely,
 - a. Best Dairy Farmer Rearing Indigenous Cattle/buffalo Breeds,
 - b. Best Artificial Insemination Technician (AIT) and
 - c. Best Dairy Cooperative/ Milk Producer Company/ Dairy Farmer Producer Organization).
 - Award consists of a Certificate of merit, a memento and amount in each category as under:
 - Rs. 5,00,000/- (Rupee five lakh only) -1st rank'
 - Rs. 3,00,000/- (Rupee three lakh only) -2nd rank.
 - Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rupee two lakh only) -3rd rank.
4. **India Internet Governance Forum 2021 (IIGF 2021)**
 - Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Electronics & Information Technology, inaugurated India Internet Governance Forum 2021 (IIGF 2021).
 - It is a 3-day online event on internet governance, which is jointly being organized by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI).
 - The event was centred on the theme "Empowering India through Power of Internet".
 - The main objective of the forum is to bring the stakeholders of internet governance together to discuss the roadmap for digitization and reaffirm India as an essential participant globally.
5. **FOURTH SUBMARINE OF PROJECT-75**
 - INS Vela, the fourth submarine in the series of six submarines of Project-75, was commissioned on 25 Nov 21 in the presence of Admiral Karambir Singh, Chief of the Naval Staff.
 - The formal commissioning ceremony took place at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai.
 - *The Scorpene Class submarines are being built in India by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai, under collaboration with M/s Naval Group (earlier DCNS), France.*
6. The Ministry of Ayush has decided to re-examine the matter relating to the use of Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera) leaves in ASU (Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani) drugs by constituting an expert group to this end.
7. **Noida International Greenfield Airport**: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has recently laid the foundation stone of Noida International Greenfield Airport at Jewar, Uttar Pradesh.
 - The airport will be strategically located at about 72 km from Indira Gandhi International Airport, about 52 kilometres from Noida, about 130 kilometres from Agra and about 90 kilometres from Multi-Modal Logistics Hub at Dadri.
 - The project will be implemented by Noida International Airport Limited (NIAL), which is a joint-venture company. UP Government will hold a share of 37.5 per cent in the company. Other stake-holders are Noida - 37.5 per cent, Greater Noida - 12.5 per cent and YEIDA - 12.5 per cent.

Scorpene submarines

- The Scorpene submarines are extremely potent platforms, they have advanced stealth features and are also equipped with both long range guided torpedoes as well as anti-ship missiles.
- These submarines have a state of the art SONAR and sensor suite permitting outstanding operational capabilities.
- They also have an advanced Permanent Magnetic Synchronous motor (PERMASYN) as its propulsion motor.

**DISTANCE
LEARNING
PROGRAMME**

Unlimited Study Materials
Test Series for Pre & Mains
Daily Mains Answer Writing
Recorded Video Classes

₹41,300



8. **13th ASEM Summit:** The 13th ASEM Summit with the theme "Strengthening Multilateralism for Shared Growth" will be held virtually on 25-26 November, 2021.
- The 13th Summit is being hosted by Cambodia as ASEM Chair.
 - ASEM Agenda for 2021 will prioritize on issues related to strengthening multilateralism, post-Pandemic Socio-Economic Recovery and Development as well as other regional and global issues of common interest and concern.

ASEM

- ASEM is a platform for the countries in Asia and Europe to exchange views on regional and global issues and strengthen cooperation on a wide range of areas emanating from its three pillars –
 - a. Political and Security.
 - b. Economic and Financial.
 - c. Socio-cultural.
- The ASEM grouping comprises of 51 member countries and 2 regional organizations – European Union and ASEAN.
- Countries in the grouping represent 65% of global GDP, 60% of the global population, 75% of global tourism and 55% of global trade.
- The ASEM Summit is a biennial event alternating between country in Asia and Europe and is the foremost event of ASEM process to set its priorities for dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe in the areas of political, economic, financial, social, cultural, and educational issues of common interest in a spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership. India joined ASEM process in 2006.
- The 7th ASEM Summit held in 2008 saw the first Summit level participation from India.

9. **National Mineral Development Corporation Ltd. (NMDC),** a public enterprise under the Ministry of Steel received a total of nine 5-star ratings for three years for all its operating iron ore mines viz. Kumaraswami, Bacheli Deposit-5, Deposit 14 NMZ and Deposit No 10 at the 5th National Conclave on Mines and Minerals.
10. **5th World Congress on Disaster Management:** The *5th World Congress on Disaster Management* was organised by the Disaster Management Initiatives and Convergence Society (DMICS) with a central theme of Technology, Finance and Capacity for Building Resilience to Disasters in the contexts of COVID-19.
- The first World Congress on Disaster Management was organised in the year 2008 in Hyderabad with an intention to build a strong network of tackling the disasters with the involvement of its various stakeholders across the scientific community and government.
 - The WCDM is now a global conference on disaster management outside the UN framework.
11. **PM-WANI Framework**
- The PM-WANI scheme, launched by the Department of Telecommunications, aims to setup Public Wi-Fi Networks by *Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs)* to provide public Wi-Fi services through *Public Data Offices (PDOs)* spread across length and breadth of the country to accelerate proliferation of Broadband Internet services.
 - Light-touch regulation of Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access network Interface (PM-WANI) framework will encourage entrepreneurs to set up public wifi hotspots and generate additional revenue for themselves, stated Deputy Director General (Technology), Department of Telecom (DoT) in Mumbai, Shri Ajay Kamal.
 - As per the National Digital Communication Plan, the Central government has set a target of setting up of 10 million Wi-Fi hotspots by 2022 and the PM-WANI scheme will facilitate this.
12. **NITI- BMZ Dialogue on Development Cooperation**
- To promote cooperation between India and Germany on various areas of mutual interest, NITI Aayog and Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development (BMZ) signed Statement of Intent (SoI) on November 23, 2021.
 - The Indian delegation was led by Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairperson, NITI Aayog, and Government of India.
 - The first Dialogue is expected to be held in the month of February of 2022.

- This SoI intends to establish an overarching mechanism as “NITI- BMZ Dialogue on Development Cooperation” to facilitate a common platform for periodic bilateral discussions, sharing of developmental policy experiences and means to have an overview of other ongoing bilateral programmes.
 - Under ambit of this SoI, NITI Aayog and BMZ would conduct joint research to assist in the development of approaches and formulation of policies to address multi-sectoral challenges. Government agencies, leading think tanks, industry and academia would be involved from both the sides to analyse issues of relevance and to offer input to both sides for deliberations.
13. Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Railways, has recently announced the introduction of theme-based tourist circuit trains **Bharat Gaurav Trains**.
- Service Provider would be free to decide theme like Guru Kripa trains for covering important places of Sikh culture, Ramayana trains for places connected with Lord Shri Ram etc.
14. **ABU - UNESCO Peace Media Awards 2021**: Doordarshan's programme 'DEAFinitely Leading the Way' won an award under 'Living Well with Super Diversity' category, while All India Radio's programme 'Living on the edge - The coastal lives' won another award in the category of 'Ethical & Sustainable Relationship with Nature' at the recently held ABU - UNESCO Peace Media Awards 2021 at Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.
- The awards were given by UNESCO in collaboration with Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) under 'Together for Peace' (T4P) initiative.
15. **JIGYASA Programme**: CSIR has partnered with IIT Bombay to develop a Virtual Lab platform under CSIR Jigyasa programme, which facilitates classroom learning with laboratory research for school students.
- The target audience for the Virtual Lab platform is students of the standard VI to XII (11-18 years) who would like to explore science using different activities, experienced researchers and faculties on the subjects of Science, Mathematics, Biology and IT.
16. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh has recently inaugurated ISRO's 5-day Technology Conclave-2021 and highlighted the Futuristic and Disruptive Technologies to be developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO.
- The Conclave is being organised by the Directorate of Technology Development & Innovation (DTDI) under the aegis of ISRO.
17. Union Minister of Education, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Shri Dharmendra Pradhan has recently visited IIT Guwahati and inaugurated the state-of-the-art Centre for Nanotechnology (CNT) and Centre for Indian Knowledge System (CIKS).
18. **E-shram portal**: The number of Unorganised Sector workers registration at the e-Shram portal has been rising steadily over the 12 weeks since its launch.
- The top five occupational categories of women unorganised sector workers registered on the portal are Agriculture (2.1 crores), Domestic and Household workers (71 lakhs), Apparel (46 lakhs), Construction (23 lakhs) and Miscellaneous (17.98 lakhs).
 - Correspondingly, the top five occupational categories for male workers are Agriculture (2.3 crores), Construction (78 lakhs), Automobile & Transportation (22.1 lakhs), Capital Goods and Manufacturing (18.9 lakhs) and Miscellaneous (7.7 lakhs).
 - Age-group wise composition of unorganised sector workers registered at the portal in the last 12 weeks shows that the workers in the age group of '18-40' have the highest share, followed by those in the age-group '40-50' (figure below).
19. Food Corporation of India (FCI) under Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD) has developed its first state-of-art laboratory for in house testing of food grain samples.
20. Union Minister of State Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions Dr Jitendra Singh, who is also Incharge Department of Pensions, today clarified and reiterated that Joint Bank Account is not mandatory for Spouse Pension.

21. **Operation "Molten Metal"** : In an intelligence operation by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), code-named "Molten Metal", several Indian and foreign (Chinese, Taiwanese, and South-Korean) nationals suspected to be indulging in smuggling gold into India from Hong Kong using the air cargo route, were identified. The intelligence indicated that the gold smuggled in the form of machinery parts was being melted and moulded into bar/cylinder shapes before being disposed of in the local market.
22. **Special Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme (SCLCSS)** : Union Minister for MSME, Shri Narayan Rane has recently launched the Special Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme (SCLCSS) for services sector in the presence of senior officers of the Ministry of MSME at Guwahati.
- The scheme will help in meeting the technology related requirements of enterprises in the services sector and has a provision of 25% capital subsidy for procurement of Plant & Machinery and service-equipments through institutional credit to the SC-ST MSEs without any sector specific restrictions on technology upgradation.
23. **Ayush-64**: The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) has transferred the technology of Ayush-64, an effective drug in mild and asymptomatic and mild to moderate cases of Covid-19, to 46 companies.
- Ayush-64 is a very effective medicine that helps with the mild and asymptomatic cases of Covid-19.
24. **Cyber Security Grand Challenge**: The Cyber Security Grand Challenge was launched jointly by Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) and Data Security Council of India(DSCI) on 15th January 2020 with a total prize money of INR 3.2 crore and a goal to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship spirit by building key cybersecurity capabilities in the country and contribute to strengthen the cyber security posture of the nation.
- Securely Share Software Pvt.Ltd., Payatu Security Consulting Pvt. Ltd., Monoxor have respectively won the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize.
25. **Global Innovation Summit 2021**: Recently, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Global Innovation Summit of the Pharmaceuticals sector.
26. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh dedicated to the Nation renovated Rezag La Memorial at a solemn ceremony at Chushul in Ladakh on November 18, 2021.
- The Memorial was constructed in 1963 in the Chushul plains, at an altitude of over 15,000 feet, right at the India-China border to honour the troops of Charlie Company of 13 KUMAON Regiment, who on November 18, 1962, had defended Rezag La and the surrounding areas located at over 16,500 feet on the Kailash Ranges in Eastern Ladakh.
27. **Wings India, 2022** : Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Union Minister of Civil Aviation has recently inaugurated a curtain raiser event about Wings India, 2022 which is Asia's largest event on Civil Aviation (Commercial, General and Business Aviation).
- The minister appreciated the efforts the Civil Aviation Ministry, AAI and FICCI with the support of MEA and states government in organising this important event i.e. Wings India 2022, Hyderabad with the apt theme India@75: "New Horizon for Aviation Industry".
28. **PESA Act**: To celebrate 75 years of progressive India and commemorate 25th year of enactment of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996 (PESA), the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in collaboration with Ministry of Tribal Affairs and National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj organised a 'One Day National Conference on the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996 (PESA)' as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.
29. **OP SANKALP**: INS Trikand is currently deployed in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman as part of Operation Sankalp, the Indian Navy's effort to maintain a frontline ship in the region to ensure safe and secure movement of trade, instil confidence in the maritime community and contribute to regional maritime security.
30. **EXERCISE PRASTHAN**: An offshore security exercise, code-named 'Prasthan' was conducted in the Offshore Development Area (ODA) off Mumbai on 16th November 2021, under the aegis of Headquarters, Western Naval Command.

- Conducted every six months, this exercise is an important element of ensuring offshore security and aims to integrate the efforts of all maritime stakeholders, including the Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Coast Guard, ONGC, the Port Trust, Customs, the state fisheries department and the Marine Police, in refining SOPs and response-actions to a variety of contingencies in the ODAs.
31. The government has signed a contract for procurement of two **Fixed Base Full Mission Simulators (FBFMS)** for Jaguar Aircraft from HAL for IAF with five years Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (CAMC) at a combined total cost of Rs.357 crore.
- These simulators would be installed at Air Force Stations Jamnagar and Gorakhpur.
32. **Shakti** : Advanced Electronic Warfare (EW) System 'Shakti' has been designed and developed by Defence Electronics Research Laboratory (DLRL) Hyderabad a laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for Capital Warships of the Indian Navy for the interception, detection, classification, identification and jamming of conventional and modern Radars.
- The Shakti EW system will provide an electronic layer of defence against modern radars and anti-ship missiles to ensure electronic dominance and survivability in the maritime battlefield.
 - This system will replace the earlier generation EW Systems of the Indian Navy.
33. Union Minister of Heavy Industries. Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey has recently inaugurated the State of the art, prototype Air Pollution Control Tower (APCT) developed in-house by BHEL in Noida.
- Designed and developed by BHEL's Corporate R&D Division, manufactured at its HEEP Haridwar plant, and installed by Power Sector [NR] Noida, the APCT operates by pulling polluted air through its base and capturing the particulate matter in filters installed in the tower.
 - Clean air is then released from the top of the tower.
 - The captured particulate matter gets collected in the hopper at the bottom of the APCT for periodic removal for disposal.
 - BHEL's Pollution Control Research Institute, Haridwar will carry out the performance study of the APCT for one year.
34. **SAI Institutional Awards**: Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports Shri Anurag Thakur conferred the first ever SAI Institutional Awards to 246 athletes and coaches recently in New Delhi.
35. Recently, Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying to extend the benefits to beneficiaries of various schemes of MoFPI and DAHD.
- The objective of schemes of MoFPI and DAHD are interlinked and complementary in nature. Hence, the MoU will facilitate MoFPI and DAHD to work together to achieve the goal for income generation, sustainable development of the rural poor through the extension of benefits of various schemes to the beneficiaries whenever they require financial assistance without any limitation.
36. **USOF scheme** : The Union Cabinet has given its approval for provisioning of mobile services in Uncovered Villages of Aspirational Districts across five States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra & Odisha.
- The Project envisages to provide 4G based mobile services in the uncovered villages of 44 Aspirational Districts across five States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra & Odisha at an estimated cost of implementation about Rs 6,466 crore including operational expenses for 5 years.
 - The project would be funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).
 - The project will be completed within 18 months after the signing of the Agreement and likely to be completed by November 23.
37. **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)**: The 7th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Conclave of Chiefs is being hosted by French Navy at Paris from 15 - 16 Nov 21. Vice Admiral R Hari Kumar, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, is leading a two member Indian Naval delegation for this Conclave.

- IONS was conceived by the Indian Navy in 2008 as a forum which seeks to enhance maritime co-operation among Navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.
 - The inaugural edition of IONS was held in Feb 2008 at New Delhi, with Indian Navy as the Chair for two years.
 - The IONS Chair is presently held with France.
38. Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, inaugurated the first Internet Exchange in the state of Uttarakhand, hosted at Dehradun.
39. **GOA MARITIME CONCLAVE - 2021:** The 3rd edition of Goa Maritime Conclave (GMC) - 2021 was recently held under the aegis of Naval War College, Goa.
- The GMC is Indian Navy's Outreach Initiative providing a multinational platform to harness the collective wisdom of practitioners of maritime security and the academia towards garnering outcome oriented maritime thought.
 - The theme for this year's edition of GMC is "*Maritime Security and Emerging Non-Traditional Threats: A Case for Proactive Role for IOR Navies*", which has been derived keeping in mind that necessity of 'winning everyday peace' in the maritime domain.
40. During his visit to Madhya Pradesh on 15th November, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has inaugurated the redeveloped Rani Kamalapati Railway Station, 2021 at around 3 PM.
- The redeveloped *Rani Kamalapati Railway station*, named after brave and fearless Queen Kamalapati of the Gond kingdom, is the first world class railway station in Madhya Pradesh. Redeveloped in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode, the station has been designed as a green building with modern world class amenities that also takes into account ease of mobility for divyangjans.
 - The station is also developed as a hub for integrated multi-modal transport.
41. **Sir Pratap Singh Cup 2021:** In a bid to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of Independence and India's glorious cultural history through Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Ministry of Culture is organizing the final match of the M.P. Cup Polo Championship - Sir Pratap Singh Cup 2021.
- The event is being organized under the auspices of Indian Polo Association and it is supported by Just in Time Sports Foundation.
 - Sir Pratap Singh Cup is one of India's most historic and premier tournaments, which was instituted in 1921.
42. **Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UPDIC)**
- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurated the first operationalised private sector defence manufacturing facility in Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor (UPDIC) in Lucknow on November 13, 2021.
 - The facility, run by *Aerolloy Technologies*, a wholly owned subsidiary of PTC industries, will manufacture parts for Aircraft Engines, Helicopter Engines, Structural parts for aircrafts, Drones and UAV, Submarines, Ultra-Light Artillery Guns, Space Launch Vehicles and Strategy Systems etc.
43. As part of the 'World toilet Day' celebrations, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has launched a week long awareness campaign on SafaiMitra Suraksha Challenge (SSC) from November 14th to 20th November 2021 to run up to the 'Swachh Amrit Diwas', an award ceremony to recognize the role and efforts of the states, cities, ULBs and Cantonment Board in Swachh Survekshan 2021, and Garbage Free Star Rating certification on 20th November, 2021.
44. **Tele-Law Mobile App** :Union Minister of Law and Justice Shri Kiren Rijju launched the Citizen's Tele-Law Mobile App.
- He also encouraged the participants to download the Citizens' Tele-Law Mobile App for optimizing the citizen-centric justice delivery mechanism.
45. The State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee (SLSSC) of Uttar Pradesh on 11th November, 2021 approved proposals submitted by the State worth Rs 1,882 Crore for making provision of tap water connections in rural areas.

- Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), there is provision for constitution of State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee (SLSSC) for consideration and approval of schemes to be taken up for making provision of tap water supply to rural households.
 - The SLSSC acts as a State level Committee to consider water supply schemes/ projects, and a nominee of the National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM).
 - Government of India is a member of the committee.
46. **National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)** has taken a new initiative by establishing out a customer focused unit - "Customer-Care Unit," which will facilitate the interaction of customers with all its Business units. This team will support the customer queries (24x7) for all the operations.
- NIXI has three businesses, viz. – Internet Exchange, Dot IN Registry, and IRINN and all three units deal with their respective customers, supporting and managing their queries.
 - At times same customer might be consuming services from two different units of NIXI and interact with two different teams.
 - To overcome this and make the experience seamless, NIXI has created this Customer-Care Unit – for efficient response towards their customers.
47. **National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)** is a not-for-profit organization (section 8 of the Companies Act 2013) working since 2003 for spreading the internet infrastructure to the citizens of India through the following activities:
- a. Internet Exchanges through which the internet data is exchanged amongst ISP's, Data Centers, and CDNs.
 - b. IN Registry, managing, and operation of .IN country-code domain and. भारत IDN domain for India.
 - c. IRINN, managing and operating Internet protocol (IPv4/IPv6).
 - Shri Anil Kumar Jain is its CEO.
48. **The Ministry of Culture will hold a 'Vande Bharatam- Nritya Utsav', an All-India dance competition as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.**
- The objective of this competition is to select dancers who will perform during the cultural programme at the Republic Day Parade of 2022.
 - The final performance will take place on January 26, 2022 at Rajpath, India Gate.
 - She has also launched the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav mobile App* to enable all single point access to all information related to the 75th anniversary celebrations of India's independence.
49. **In a major step towards the mission and vision of Government of India of Ease of Living and Ease of Doing Business, Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has further simplified claim settlement process through rationalization of various requirements under Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Accounting, Audit, Transfer and Refund) Rules, 2016.**
- For claimants, requirement of Advance Receipt has been waived off, requirement of Succession Certificate/ Probate of Will/ Will has been relaxed up to Rs 5,00,000 (five lakh) both for Physical & DEMAT shares, notarization of documents has been replaced with self-attestation and requirements of Affidavits and Surety relatively have been eased.
50. **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched two innovative customer centric initiatives of RBI viz.**
- a. **Retail Direct Scheme.**
 - b. **Reserve Bank - Integrated Ombudsman Scheme.**
 - Referring to the two schemes that have been launched today, the Prime Minister said that these schemes will expand the scope of investment in the country and make access to capital markets easier, more secure for investors.
 - Retail direct scheme has given small investors in the country a simple and safe medium of investment in government securities.
 - Similarly, One Nation, One Ombudsman System has taken shape in the banking sector with the Integrated Ombudsman Scheme.
51. **Ministry of Tourism in its ongoing effort to strengthen the Hospitality & Tourism Industry has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)**

- Ministry of Tourism has already signed similar MOUs with Easy My Trip, Cleartrip, Yatra.com, Make My Trip and Goibibo.
- The primary objective of this MOU is to provide an extensive visibility to accommodation units, which have self-certified themselves on SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for the Hospitality Industry) on the OTA platform.
- The MoU also outlines both parties to encourage Units to register on NIDHI and thereby on SAATHI and encourage local tourism Industry with appropriate safeguards for curbing spread of COVID-19.

52. Critical Noise Treatment Algorithm

- Indian astronomers have developed an algorithm that can increase the accuracy of data from exoplanets by reducing the contamination by the Earth's atmosphere and the disturbances due to instrumental effects and other factors.
- This algorithm, called the critical noise treatment algorithm, can help to study the environment of exoplanets with better precision.
- With this purpose, a group of astronomers at Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bangalore has been using the ground-based optical telescopes available in India and the data obtained by the space telescope "*Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite*" or TESS.

53. **'Har Ghar Dastak' campaign:** Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare is organising Har Ghar Dastak campaign which aims to ensure that all the adult population is covered with the first dose of COVID vaccine, while those who are due for the second doses are also motivated to take the second dose.
- 'HarGharDastak' which means knocking at every door, aims to reach out to those eligible adult population who have either not taken their first dose or for some reason have missed their second dose.

54. *Committee for Development of Avenues for Ship Acquisition, Financing and Leasing from GIFT IFSC in India submits its Report to IFSCA.*

- The Committee was constituted by IFSCA on 24th June 2021 under the chairpersonship of Ms. Vandana Aggarwal.
- The Committee observed that India, despite having a large coastline, growing domestic market and international seaborne trade, deep-rooted maritime traditions, and skilled seafarers, it continues to have a smaller share in international shipping sector, thus becoming a net importer of shipping services especially ship finance.

55. A 15-year-old girl, Miss Vinisha Umashankar, from Tamil Nadu, who was recognized Earth Day Network Rising Star 2021 (USA) for her idea of 'Solar Ironing Cart', has exhorted the world to move towards clean energy during the recently concluded COP 26.

- A key benefit of the solar ironing cart is that it eliminates the need for coal for ironing bringing about a welcome shift towards clean energy.
- End users can move around and offer services at doorstep for increasing their daily earning.
- The ironing cart can also be fitted with a coin-operated GSM PCO, USB charging points and mobile recharging which can fetch extra income.

56. *India today launched 'E-Amrit', a web portal on electric vehicles (EVs), at the ongoing COP26 Summit in Glasgow, UK.*

- E-Amrit is a one-stop destination for all information on electric vehicles – busting myths around the adoption of EVs, their purchase, investment opportunities, policies, subsidies, etc.
- The portal has been developed and hosted by NITI Aayog under a collaborative knowledge exchange programme with the UK government and as part of the UK-India Joint Roadmap 2030, signed by the Prime Ministers of the two countries.
- E-Amrit intends to complement initiatives of the government on raising awareness on EVs and sensitizing consumers on the benefits of switching to electric vehicles.

57. *John Kerry, U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate announced at the UNFCCC COP26 today that the United States of America (USA) has joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA) as a member country.*

- U.S becomes the 101st country to sign the framework agreement of the ISA to catalyse global energy transition through a solar-led approach.

58. *To facilitate its customers and partners, NIXI has gone digital by enabling digital payments across its three business units by integrating payment gateways on all its customer-facing websites for ease of use.*
- This integration will lead to increased ease of use for NIXI's customers by offering real-time payments, providing uninterrupted services and ensuring seamless experience to all stakeholders.
59. **"Nutrition Smart Village"**: As part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, to commemorate the 75th year of Independence of India a programme on "Nutrition Smart Village" will be initiated to strengthen the Poshan Abhiyan. This new initiative aims to reach out to 75 villages across India through the network of All India Coordinated Research Project on Women in Agriculture (AICRP-WIA) which is in operation at 13 centres in 12 States of India
60. *Srinagar has recently joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) with a special mention for its craft and folk art.*
61. The Department of Justice kicked-off the week-long **"Tele-Law on Wheels"** campaign from 8th to 14th November, 2021.
- As part of this campaign, a series of activities are being undertaken to empower people through pre-litigation advice for rightfully claiming their entitlements and for timely redressal of their difficulties.
62. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of Palkhi Marg to facilitate the movement of devotees to Pandharpur.
63. *Akash Kumar has recently won the Bronze Medal at the World Boxing Championships.*

Mineral Conservation and Development (Amendment) Rules, 2021

- Ministry of Mines has notified the Mineral Conservation and Development (Amendment) Rules, 2021 on 3rd November, 2021 to amend the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 1917.
- The MCDR have been framed under section 18 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 [MMDR Act] to provide rules regarding conservation of minerals, systematic and scientific mining, development of the mineral in the country and for the protection of environment.
- The highlights of amendments in the Rules are as follows:
 - a. All plans and sections related to mine shall be prepared by combination of **Digital Global Positioning System (DGPS) or Total Station or by drone survey** in relation to certain or all leases as may be specified by Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM).
 - b. Submission of digital images of mining area by lessees and Letter of Intent holders.
 - c. Requirement of submitting satellite images obtained from CARTOSAT-2 satellite LISS-IV sensor on the scale of cadastral map deleted in view of the insertion of provision for submission of high resolution Georeferenced Ortho-rectified Multispectral satellite and use of drone survey as per Rule 34A.
 - d. Provision of daily return omitted to reduce compliance burden.
 - e. Allowed engagement of a part-time mining engineer or a part-time geologist for category 'A' mines having leased area below 25 hectares. This will ease compliance burden for small miners.
 - f. In order to increase employment opportunity, diploma in mining and mine surveying granted by duly recognized institute along with a second class certificate of competency issued by the Director General of Mines Safety is added in qualification for full time Mining Engineer.
 - Also, qualification for part time Mining Engineer added.
 - g. Penalty provisions in the rules have been rationalized. Previously, the rules provided for penalty of imprisonment upto 2 years or fine upto 5 lakh rupees or both for violation of each and every rule irrespective of the severity of the violation. Amendment in the rules categorized the violations of the rules under the following major heads:
 - Major Violations: Penalty of imprisonment, fine or both.
 - Minor Violations: Penalty reduced. Penalty of only fine for such violations prescribed.
 - Violation of other rules has been decriminalized.
 - h. Provision of forfeiture of financial assurance or performance security of the lease holder added in case of non-submission of final mine closure plan within the period specified.
 - i. Amount of financial assurance increased to five lakh rupees for Category 'A' mines and three lakh rupees for Category 'B' mines from existing three and two lakh rupees, respectively.

YOJANA

Index

1. Making Gram Sabhas Vibrant.
2. Journey of Panchayats.
3. Financial Devolution.
4. Incentivization of Panchayats
5. SVAMITVA Scheme.
6. Gram Panchayat Development Plans.
7. Waste Management & Rural Planning.
8. Localising SDGs for Panchayats.
9. ISO Certified Gram Panchayats-Kerala Case Study
10. Digital Local Governance
11. People's Plan.
12. Community Livelihood Support.
13. IEC (Information, Education, Communication) Activities in Panchayats.

Making Gram Sabhas Vibrant

Introduction

- The 73rd Constitutional Amendment has provided a strong foundation for citizens' participation at the local level in the form of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).
- The Gram Panchayats are the lowest tier in the Panchayati Raj.
 - They have been envisioned to provide opportunities to the rural population to participate in the governance process at the local level, through the institutional platform of Gram Sabhas.
- Gram Sabhas are the direct representative platform. They have been vested with the powers for direct supervision of the rural programmes and projects, and to ensure accountability of GPs.

Functioning of Gram Sabhas

- Gram Sabhas (GSs) provide citizens a direct public platform for the citizens to elaborate on their problems, along with the felt needs and aspirations of the local community.
- However, the functioning of the Gram Sabhas has not been smooth and they have come under criticism due to a lack of regularity and transparency.
 - Issues such as low participation, irregular Gram Sabha meetings, absence of a coherent Gram Sabha agenda, etc., have been some of the major hurdles in their effective functioning.
 - The vulnerable sections of the village community hesitate to voice opinions due to inhibitions on account of their financial and social standing.
 - The elected representatives of the Gram Panchayat, especially the Sarpanch, exercise significant powers which often prevents their criticism in Gram Sabhas, and reduces Gram Sabhas to mere symbolic, instead of functional and vibrant platforms of democratic local governance.

Implementation

- Considering the large size of the Gram Panchayats, in some States like Karnataka, Kerala, Bihar, and West Bengal, etc., statutes have provided for additional structures like **Ward Sabhas**, meetings of which will be held prior to the Gram Sabha meetings.
 - Panchayati Raj Act has also provisioned for convening of **special Gram Sabhas** on the request of a specified number of voters from the Gram Panchayats.
 - Besides the regular meetings, some sittings are also ensured on the days of national importance, namely, Republic Day, Ambedkar Jayanti, Labour Day, Independence Day, and Gandhi Jayanti.

Significance

- The Gram Sabhas were envisioned as unique institutions which would enable the citizens to highlight grassroots-level problems and build consensus on possible solutions.
- Gram Sabhas provide the ideal platform for the flagship schemes such as Health, Education, Nutrition, Water Supply and Sanitation, to leverage the direct contact with the citizens to make them more accepting and become eager to participate.

Allocation of Fund and Monitoring

- The allocation of Finance Commission's United Grants which can be utilised to suit the local needs amongst the various functions developed to the Panchayats, is a major step towards strengthening the autonomy of Gram Sabhas.
- Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been mandated to promote devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to the PRIs across States/UTs.
 - With greater devolution, the Ministry aims to empower the Gram Sabhas by providing them with necessary resources to carry out their mandated functions properly.

Challenges and Issues

- Based on the challenges faced by the States Panchayati Raj Departments, the following recommendations have been shared with the States/UTs:

- a. **Ensuring periodic Gram Sabhas:** The Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the States/Union Territories should hold Gram Sabha meetings at such a frequency, so as to have atleast 6 to 12 meetings every year.
- b. **Formulating and distributing Agenda/Action Taken Report (ATR):** The agenda for the upcoming Gram Sabha meetings should always be prepared and must include regular practices like confirmation of minutes of previous meeting, ATR on previous minutes, approval of Gram Panchayat Development Plan, etc.
- c. **Preparing Annual Calendar:** The presence of annual calendar would enable active participation from villagers and facilitate proper scheduling of committee meetings of the panchayats.
- d. **Effective Scheduling:** The Gram Sabha meetings should be convened alternately, so that only Gram Panchayats in the selected clusters go for Gram Sabha meetings on a particular day.
- e. **Organising Sabhas at a convenient time:** The timing of the Gram Sabhas should be convenient for the village population to attend in large numbers.
- f. **Administrative presence:** The District administration should ensure attendance of Group A and B officers in all the Gram Sabha meetings.
- g. **Augmenting people's participation in Gram Sabhas:** Efforts should be made to ensure maximum attendance of all eligible citizens in the Gram Sabha meetings.
 - The minimum quorum for the meeting should be 10% of the members out of which at least 30% should be females.
 - Digital/virtual means of citizens' participation like video-conferencing systems through mobile applications, etc., wherever possible and permissible, may also be considered.
 - To improve participation in Gram Sabhas, various events like medical check-ups, demonstrations of rural technology projects, inspection visits to schools/ health centres, awards for exemplary performance of citizens etc., could be considered for being accompanied with the Gram Sabha meetings.
- h. **Incentivising Ward Members/Elected Members:** All the ward members/elected representatives of the Gram Panchayats should invariably be made members of these sub-committees, with each ward member not occupying the position in more than two sub-committees.

Conclusion and Way Forward

- The Gram Sabha should be utilised by the villagers to highlight a problem, propose a solution, and build consensus amongst the villagers.
- To ensure effective functioning of the Gram Panchayats, it is important to revitalise the Gram Sabhas as an assembly of the village.
 - Bringing transparency, responsibility, and accountability in panchayat functioning and its functionaries, would go a long way in creating Gram Panchayats as engines of socio-economic growth in the rural areas.
- Vibrant Gram Sabhas could also chart ways for achieving India's Sustainable Development Goals by facilitating their localisation to the Gram Panchayat level.

Journey of Panchayats

Introduction

- The **Part IV** of the Constitution of India contains *Directive Principles of the State Policy* in which **Article 40** is provisioned for organisation of village panchayats.
- The **73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**, promulgated on 24 April 1993, was inserted as **Part IX** in the Constitution, that enjoins the States to establish panchayats.
 - It lays down that "the State shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government."

Background

- A separate legislation "*Provisions for Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act*" (**PESA**) was passed by the Parliament in 1996 to extend Part IX of the Constitution to the areas listed under the **Fifth Schedule**, subject to certain exceptions and modifications. This legislation has following impacts :
 - a. It has extended the development, planning, and audit functioning to the Gram Sabha (GS)
 - b. It has empowered Gram Sabhas with the management and control of natural resources and adjudication of justice in accordance with traditions and customs.

- These legislations have institutionalised the *Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)* and provided for setting up of three tiers of panchayats (*only two tiers in case of States or Union Territories (UTs) having population less than 20 lakhs*).
- This Amendment contains provision for devolution of powers and responsibilities to panchayats for both preparation of plans for economic development and social justice, utilising resources available with them (*Article 243G*) and implementation of the schemes and programmes related to twenty-nine subjects listed in the 'Eleventh Schedule' of the Constitution.
- The *73rd Amendment* is the first one in India that mandated women's reservation.

Establishment of Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR)

- **MoPR** was established on **27 May 2004**, with the primary objective to oversee the implementation of Part IX of the Constitution and PESA Act 1996.
 - 'Panchayats' being a State subject, their functioning is guided by respective State/UT Panchayati Raj Acts.
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) works in partnership with States, principally to achieve the constitutional aspirations pertaining to the functioning of panchayats primarily through policy guidance, advocacy, technological support, capacity building and training (CB&T), persuasion, and financial support.
- The States/UTs have made good progress in providing basic infrastructural facilities to the panchayats such as Gram Panchayat Bhawans, computers, internet, and Common Service Centres (CSCs).
 - These infrastructural facilities have been created from various schemes of the Government of India and the State's own resources.

Women Representatives in PRIs

- PRIs are represented by the Elected Representatives, including *Elected Women Representatives (EWRs)*.
- Reservation for women in PRIs and subsequent increase in the quota by States has brought an unprecedented and huge number of women in the governance arena in India.
 - The number of ERs was 27.82 lakhs and EWRs were 10.42 lakhs (37.46%) in 2005, which increased to more than 31 lakh ERs in 2020, of which more than 14 lakh (46%) are EWRs.
- Majority of the states have made provisions of **50% reservation for women in PRIs** in their respective State Panchayati Raj Acts.

E-Governance Mechanism in Panchayats

- Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) serve around 65% of the country's population. Improving functions of PRIs for better delivery of services is essential for the well-being of rural people.
- The user-friendly interface of eGram-Swaraj, improved position of ICT infrastructure and manpower are among various reasons for enhanced adoption of eGramSwaraj portal.
 - A total of 2,50,077 Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs) for FY 2021-22 have been uploaded on the portal.

Bottom-up Planning

- Provision of basic infrastructures, emphasis one-governance, capacity building of PRIs, focused *information, education, and communication (IEC) campaign* are some of the main activities undertaken by the Ministry and States for strengthening the PRIs.
- **Backward Regions Grant Funds (BRGF) Scheme** was implemented from 2006-07 to 2014-15 in 272 identified backward districts to bridge critical gaps in local infrastructure and other developmental requirements along with the capacity building of PRIs.
 - Preparation of the district plan was an important part of BRGF.
- **Planning at the grassroots level** was strengthened with the acceptance of the recommendations of the *Fourteenth Finance Commission (XIV FC)* to utilise grants worth Rs.200292.20cores, that emphasised the preparation of a holistic plan at the GP level.
- **The Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC)** in its interim report for 2020-21 and final report for 2021- 2026 recommended an amount of Rs.60750crore and Rs.236805crore respectively for all three tiers of panchayats, also necessitated preparing their respective plans at all tiers for effective utilisation of grants.
 - Accordingly, Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) is being prepared since 2015-16, and Block Panchayat Development Plan (BPDP), and District Panchayat Development Plan (DPDP) from 2020-21.

Capacity Building of PRIs

- A new scheme of *Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)* was launched for implementation on 1st April 2018, to develop and strengthen the capacities of PRIs to become more responsive towards local development needs.
- Panchayats are being incentivised through awards and financial incentives in recognition of their good work for improving planning and delivery of services.
- *Information, education, and communication (IEC) activities* are being carried out with the aim at better and more effective communication through all the available media platforms for advocacy, awareness, and publicity to build capacity within, and enhance the performance of panchayats.

Devolution of Funds, Functions, and Functionaries (3Fs)

- Devolution Study conducted by the Ministry in 2015-16 through TISS prepared an index of devolution in practice, which analyses the actual devolution happening in the field.
- As per a paper presented by NITI Aayog, a noticeable structural change is happening in the rural economy.
 - Employment opportunities are shifting from the agriculture sector to construction, manufacturing, and service sectors.
 - So, an emphasis on skilling of rural population and promotion of rural entrepreneurship is needed in these sectors.
- As per a report prepared by KPMG, there is huge untapped potential for the growth of financial services such as credit, insurance, and digital payment facilities in rural areas.
- The Ministry has launched a scheme named '*SVAMITVA*' to prepare property records of rural people of their houses using drone surveying technology.
 - The goal is to cover most of the more than six lakh villages in the next five years.
- Effective implementation of various new initiatives of the Ministry under e-Panchayats needed- such as eGram-Swaraj, PFMS integration for online payments, citizen's charter, online audit, social audit, etc, for enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accountability of the PRIs.
- The Ministry has selected 34 GPs across States for holistic planning using spatial technology considering the availability of various types of resources, potential growth sectors, and requirements of people.

Way Forward

- In view of the increasing significance of SDG goals mainly related to poverty alleviation, food security, education, health, nutrition, drinking water, and sanitation; the panchayats need to increasingly engage with these agencies working at the village level and commensurately improve their capacity.
- Panchayats need to be empowered to levy and collect taxes, tolls, fees, user charges, etc., along with other activities to enhance their Own Source of Revenue.
- Panchayats also need to consider climate action plan as an integral part of planning and harnessing renewable energy should be an integral part of the plan.
- Progressive devolution of Functions, Funds, and Functionaries (3Fs) to the PRIs requires dedicated attention of all stakeholders to accomplish the goals of responsive and empowered local self-governance as mandated in the Constitution.

Conclusion

- A lot of Panchayats are now equipped with the basic infrastructure but gaps still remain across the States.
- In order to fill the gaps, the saturation approach needs to be adopted as announced by the Prime Minister on 75th Independence Day.
 - Representation of women in PRIs has substantially increased but effective participation requires appropriate training and exposure visits of these elected representatives.
 - E-Governance mechanism has finally reached distant PRIs, although substantial room for improvement exists.
 - The planning process has been streamlined with the preparation of plans at all tiers of panchayats, but these are needed to be made more holistic and inclusive through democratic functioning of GPs, with active functioning of Standing Committees and ward members, and effective functioning of Gram Sabhas and participation of key stakeholders.

- Further, progressive devolution of Functions, Funds, and Functionaries to PRIs through activity mapping ought to be ensured to accomplish mandated activities and to achieve the objectives of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment in order to ease the life of around 65% of the country's population living in rural areas.

Financial Devolution

Introduction

- The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act provided the constitutional status and institutional framework to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to strengthen grassroots-level democracy through the medium of elected self-governing local bodies in the rural areas of the country.
 - It also emphasised the functional and fiscal devolution of powers to the PRIs.

Basic Provisions

- The legislature of the State has been provided the powers to authorise the PRIs to levy, collect, and appropriate certain taxes, duties, tolls, fees, etc., and also assign to them the revenues of certain State-level taxes, subject to such conditions as are imposed by the State Government.
- **Grant-in-Aid** : The PRIs may also be provided with grant in-aid. In support of these requirements, **Article 243-I** of the Constitution mandates setting up of the **State Finance Commission (SFC)** every five years, which is required to make recommendations towards improvement of panchayat finances through **fiscal devolution** comprising of share of State taxes, assignment of tax handles for Own-Source Revenues (OSRs), and provision of grant-in-aid.
- **Central Finance Commission** : Under the **Article 280(3) (bb)** of the Constitution which was inserted vide **the 73rd Amendment Act, 1993**, **Central Finance Commissions** are required to make recommendations to augment the **Consolidated Fund of the State** to supplement the resources of the panchayats in the State based on the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State.

Central Finance Commission Recommendations

- Recommendations for devolution to the Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) began from the **Tenth Finance Commission onwards (period 1995-2000)**.
 - Up to the Twelfth Finance Commission (period 2005-10), nominal amounts of devolution were made to the RLBs on a lump sum basis.
- Thirteenth Finance Commission (XIII FC) awarded a percentage of the divisible pool, i.e.
 - a. **Basic Grant** amounting to 1.5% of the divisible pool,
 - b. **Performance Grant**, which will be payable for a period of four years starting from 2011-12 at the rate of 0.5% of the divisible pool in the first year, and 1% of the divisible pool in the remaining three years.
- The Commission had also recommended an annual separate **Special Area Basic Grant** of Rs.20 per capita carved out of the total Basic Grant, in the award period for Fifth and Sixth Schedule Areas and the Areas exempted from the purview of Part IX and IXA of the Constitution.
 - For these areas, it had also recommended a **Special Area Performance Grant** of Rs.10 per capita for 2011-12 and Rs.20 per capita there onwards carved out of the total Basic Grant.
- **Fourteenth Finance Commission (XIV FC)** has ensured the Grants provided were intended to be used to improve the status of basic services within the functions assigned to them under relevant legislations.
- **Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC)** has recommended devolution to all tiers of the Panchayati Raj including the Traditional Bodies of Non-Part IX States and Fifth and Sixth Schedule Areas. XV FC grants are provided in two parts, namely,
 - a. **Basic (Untied) Grant** (50% for 2020-21 and 40% for 2021-22 to 2025-26): Basic grants are untied and can be used by RLBs for location-specific felt needs, under the **twenty-nine subjects** enshrined in the **Eleventh Schedule** of the Constitution, except for salaries and other establishment costs.
 - b. **Tied Grant** (50% for 2020-21 and 60% for 2021-22 to 2025-26): Tied grants are to be used for the basic services of:
 - Sanitation and maintenance of ODF status, and this should include management and treatment of household waste, and human excreta and faecal sludge management in particular.
 - Supply of drinking water, rainwater harvesting, and water recycling.

Recommendations for RLBs


- As per **Article 243-1**, the **State Finance Commissions (SFCs)** are mandated to review the financial position of the panchayats and make recommendations on the principles that should govern:
 - The distribution between the State and the panchayats of the net proceeds of taxes, duties, tolls, and fees leviable by the State, and their distribution between the panchayats at all levels for such proceeds;
 - The determination of the taxes, duties, tolls, and fees which may be assigned to, or appropriated by the panchayats;
 - The grants-in-aid to panchayats from the consolidated fund of the States;
 - The measures needed to improve the financial position of the panchayats;
 - Any other matter in the interest of sound finance of the panchayats.
- SFCs have adopted varying criteria towards proposing devolution out of States' net tax pools/States' own revenues to the RLBs in the States.

Own Sources of Revenues (OSRs) of RLBs

- Gram Panchayats in general are empowered to levy the most numbers of taxes and non-taxes within their jurisdiction.
- There are some variations with respect to levying of tax/non-tax by panchayats across States.
 - In most States, tax on house, building, and land are obligatory with some exceptions in a few.
 - The major variations across States are also in the collection of user charges such as water rate, lighting rate, sanitary rate, drainage rate, etc.
- A World Bank Study has identified that the legislations of the States have provided to the RLBs as many as 78 types of taxes, surcharges, cess, user charges, and fees as below:


Challenges


- MoPR being the nodal ministry for overseeing the implementation of the recommendations of the Central Finance Commissions has created many enabling digital mechanisms like **eGramSwaraj** and **Audit Online** towards ensuring effective utilisation of the grants by the RLBs.
- The Constitution provides that the Central Finance Commission should suggest measures to augment consolidated funds of States based on the recommendations of SFCs.
 - However, all Central Finance Commissions have been constrained due to the non-availability and non-synchronisation of the SFC reports for the relevant periods, as the States have been constituting SFCs at different times and with varying regularity.
 - At the State level, it has often been observed that adequate attention is not paid to the principal recommendations of the SFCs.
- Improving Own Sources of Revenues will also strengthen the link between revenue and expenditure related decisions of the panchayats, which is essential to promote efficiency as well as accountability in services-related provisions.





Introducing
IAS GYAN
PREDICT THE UNPREDICTABLE
An online initiative of **APTI PLUS**


Android Application [Ver 2.0]
REVAMPED & ENRICHED WITH STATE-OF-ART FEATURES!


 **Peer Discussion**

 **Download Facility**

 **Bookmark Option**



 **AI based Test Series**

 **Day Night Mode**

 **Reward in Test Series & MCQs**

Other facilities:

- Live Classes
- News & Articles
- Daily MCQs
- Videos & Blogs
- A to Z Study Materials



Action Points

- a. Updation of PRI Acts/Financial Rules and making them available in public domain.
- b. Better assessment of properties required for levying Property Tax.
- c. The taxation laws/rules of PRIs have a large number of exemptions for various categories of tax-paying citizens/entities, which may have outlived their utilities.
 - A detailed analysis is to be carried out in the States to have a relook on these exemptions and do away with them, however possible.
- d. Augmentation of Tax Administration Structure along with Technology-based Tax Administration.

Conclusion

- The PRIs play an important role in the economic development of rural populations and adequate fiscal devolution to them towards fulfilment of their responsibility as an essential requirement.
- It is envisaged that increased roles being assigned to these local self-governance institutions is bound to substantially increase the quantum of panchayat finances.
- It is expected that at least 10-20% of the public expenditure would be in the realm of the panchayats with their own sources of revenue covering at least 25% of their budget at an aggregate level.
- Such a development would go a long way towards the major roles to be played by these institutions in the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, for which our country stands fully committed.

Incentivisation of Panchayats

Introduction

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has been incentivising best performing Panchayats/States/UTs through National Panchayat Awards, including financial incentives ranging from Rs5 Lakh to Rs50 Lakh, across the country through awards annually under the Incentivisation of Panchayats Scheme on the occasion of National Panchayati Raj Day celebrated on 24th April every year.
- This incentivisation encourages awardees who make special efforts, and create models for others to follow.
 - It brings public attention to awardees' performance, which encourages all panchayats/RLBs, States, and UTs to excel. This creates an ecosystem for overall good governance at the local level.

Initiatives

- MoPR introduced *Panchayat Empowerment and Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS)* during the year 2005-06 for States/UTs towards their performance on the extent of devolution carried out by them.
 - Under PEAIS, a second component to incentivise panchayats was introduced in the year 2011-12 to put in place an accountability and performance system at the local government level.
- To provide panchayats with adequate technical and administrative support, strengthen their infrastructure and e-enablement, promote devolution, and improve their functioning, centrally sponsored scheme of '*Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA)*' scheme was approved and launched during the year 2013-14.
 - Accordingly, inter-alia, erstwhile schemes of MoPR including PEAIS were subsumed in the scheme of RGPSA.
- Incentivisation of panchayats is now funded under an independent scheme- Incentivisation of Panchayats as Central Component of *Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan* with effect from 2016-17.

National Panchayat Awards

- In the year 2008, a National Convention of the Chairpersons of the Zila Parishads and the Intermediate Panchayats was organised by MoPR from 22-24 April to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the enactment of the *Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992* with effect from **24 April 1993**.
- *The National Panchayat Awards* under the Incentivisation of Panchayats scheme are conferred annually on 24th April.
- National Panchayat Awards have become a medium for creating awareness and sharing of knowledge across the country about the achievements of the Panchayats/States/UTs thus raising the level of, commitment of all stakeholders benefiting the nation as a result.

Impact

- a. *An impetus towards greater transparency and efficiency:* For a more efficient, transparent, and speedy processing, the entire process of filing nominations by Panchayats/Councils up to the final recommendation by States/UTs to Ministry of Panchayati Raj was made online with effect from the Award Year 2016.
- b. *Institution of Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award (GPDPA):* To encourage Gram Panchayats which have developed their GPDs according to the State/UT specific guidelines prepared in line with the model guidelines issued by MoPR, a new award namely, GPDPA was instituted during the year 2018.
- c. *Incremental participation from Panchayats under National Panchayat Awards:* As a result of vigorous efforts for creating greater awareness and motivation among Panchayats across the country **for National Panchayat Awards**, the level of competition has increased over the years as the total number of participants for the Award Year 2021 reached around 74,000 which is an increase of 28% over the previous year.
- d. *Direct transfer of award money to awardee Panchayats:* As an initiative with effect from the award year 2021, award money is directly transferred electronically to awardee Panchayats.

Conclusion

- Over the period, various initiative/improvements have been taken for these awards and the introduction of new award categories/themes to focus on specific areas/sectors, and socially important issues, etc.
- Although, criteria for evaluation of various categories of awards have been developed over the years through extensive deliberations, however, improvement and refinement in the award system is a continuous policy intervention in tune with time keeping given shifting priorities for the attainment of new goals.
- Previously mostly the emphasis was laid on processes-based awards such as the conduct of Gram Sabha, preparation of development plans with little association with its outcome.
- It is, therefore, envisaged to alter the qualitative aspect of measuring performances by bringing in outcome-based parameters and themes which align with the core essence of concrete development.

SVAMITVA Scheme

Introduction

- The management of land resources is considered an important component of the economic policies of any country.
- Ownership of land in rural areas is based on physical possession of the property and lacks sufficient documentary evidence of ownership, which can be used to leverage the property to avail loans and other financial benefits.
 - In the absence of a legal document, the owner of the property in the rural areas is not able to leverage it as a financial asset acceptable by the banks to provide loans and other financial assistance.
 - These residents are left with no other option but to avail loans from non-institutional creditors who may charge them steep interest rates.

Background

- In India an average household has 77% of its total assets in real estate, which includes residential buildings, buildings used for farm and non-farm activities, constructions such as recreational facilities, and rural and urban land.
- The **Lack of Record of Rights (RoR)** in the rural inhabited areas in India results in
 - a. low level of land governance,
 - b. presumptive ownership of properties,
 - c. long pending property-related disputes,
 - d. illiquid land market in rural areas.
- Considering the lack of Record of Rights (RoR) and absence of survey of inhabited (abadi) areas in villages, there was a requirement to provide RoR in the form of Property Cards to village household owners utilising the latest drone survey technology across 6.62 lakh villages of India, leading to conceptualisation of **SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) Scheme**.

Aims and Objectives

- The Scheme aims to provide the 'record of rights' to village household owners possessing houses in inhabited rural areas and issuance of property cards to the property owners. This would facilitate monetisation of rural residential assets for credit and other financial services.

- **Objectives of the Scheme include:**

- a) Leveraging property as a financial asset by the citizen of rural India
- b) Creation of accurate land records for rural planning
- c) Provide an integrated property validation solution for rural India.
- d) Serve as a means of reduction in property-related disputes
- e) Facilitate with the determination of property tax
- f) Creation of survey infrastructure and GIS (Geographic Information System) maps that can be used by any department or agency.

Features

- SVAMITVA Scheme uses the combination of Survey Grade Drones and CORS network (Continuously Operated Reference Stations) to accurately survey large areas in a very short span of time.
- The high resolution and accurate image-based maps facilitate the creation of the most durable record of property holdings in areas with no legacy revenue records.
 - Such accurate image-based maps provide a clear demarcation of land holdings in a very short time compared to on-ground physical measurement and mapping of the land parcels.

Implementation

- The pilot phase of the Scheme was rolled out on 24th April 2020 in six States namely Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. Later on, villages of one border district of Punjab and Rajasthan and few villages of Andhra Pradesh were also added in the pilot phase of the implementation.
- So far, 28 States and UTs have signed MoU with Survey of India for implementation of SVAMITVA Scheme in their States/UTs.
- Based on *Socio-Economic and Caste Census-2011 (SECC-2011)* estimates of rural areas in India, the number of households expected to be benefitted from the Scheme is approximately 13.13 crores (Based on the number of households that have reported owned houses in rural areas of 29 States/UTs).

Engagement with DFS

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has engaged with the *Department of Financial Services (DFS)* in an endeavour to provide legal validation to the property cards for examination of title deeds/property cards by the bank authorities so that the same are recognised by the banks for loans and other financial benefits.
- The Department consulted banks on providing loans against the property card format issued by the concerned State department to the property owners for monetising their assets.
- As a result, States have amended their respective State Acts/Rules for provisioning of property cards as a valid legal document of ownership and engaged with banks for formulating formats of property cards acceptable for mortgage purposes.

Benefits

- There are several other benefits to the Gram Panchayat as well as to the other stakeholders through the creation of accurate maps.
 - The creation of accurate land records and GIS maps will support Panchayats in the preparation of a better-quality *Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP)*.
- *CORS network* provides unprecedented opportunities for innovation and all land surveys.
- The Scheme has given an impetus to the *drone ecosystem* in the country. Currently, there are nearly 119 drones deployed in various States for conducting drone surveys and the number will soon increase to 300.

Conclusion

- SVAMITVA Scheme aims for holistic development of Gram Panchayat through the empowerment of villages and their residents which will eventually make rural India Atmanirbhar.

Gram Panchayat Development Plans

Introduction

- The Panchayat System has been evolving into institutions of local self-governance. Over the last two decades, several initiatives have been taken by the states and the central governments to realise the Constitutional mandate.
 - Since then, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been striving for capacity building of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) through multiple initiatives including promoting decentralised participatory planning in a convergent and effective manner.

Background

- The theory for democratic decentralisation is founded upon the notion that greater participation of the community in local affairs will improve the quality of services provided by the Government, particularly ones aimed at improving the lives of poor and marginal groups in society.
- The **73rd Constitutional Amendment** has created a formal three-tier structure of decentralised local governance for rural India with special emphasis on the inclusion of women, SCs, STs, and other marginalised communities as partners in governance.
- **Article 243G** of the Indian Constitution mandates economic development and social justice through an inclusive, community-driven, and holistic planning process of the Panchayat System, thereby evolving into institutions of local self-governance.

GPDP: Comprehensive Planning

- As a vehicle for comprehensive and convergent development planning, the preparation of the **Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP)** was institutionalised during the FY 2015-16.
 - GPDP process facilitates decentralised planning by the community members of the village.

Funds Allocation

- The Fifteenth Finance Commission (FC-XV) has allocated Rs 236805 crores for RLBs in 2021-26 of which 40% of the recommended grant will be allocated to untied grants and the remaining 60% as tied grants.
 - **Untied grants** can be used for felt needs under the 29 subjects enlisted in the XI Schedule, except for salaries and other establishment costs.
 - Regarding **Tied Grants**, 30% of the total grants be utilised for drinking water, rainwater harvesting, and water recycling, and 30% of the total grants to be utilised for sanitation and maintenance of Open Defecation Free (ODF) status.

Objectives of GPDP

- a. To ensure integrated and inclusive development of the rural areas governed by Gram Panchayats, which is not only geared towards infrastructure oriented development but also social, economic, and community development.
- b. To enable and engage the community in participatory planning and decision-making processes.
- c. To ensure identification of locally available resources and addressing local needs of all communities through participatory planning and convergence.
- d. To ensure inclusion and welfare of the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, and other marginalised communities, Other Backward Communities, women and children, vulnerable groups, people with disabilities, etc., in the formulation and implementation of the GPDP to ensure the provision of basic social goods and a life of dignity.
- e. To improve efficiency and efficacy in public service delivery in local areas.
- f. To strengthen accountability measures at the local level.

GPDP - Convergence of Schemes and Sectors

- The GPDP planning process has to be comprehensive which involves convergence with schemes related to 29 subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the constitution.
- The convergence of all plans and schemes of different line departments through GPDP will avoid duplication, reduce the financial burden, and accelerate the achievement of desired results.

- The large distribution of funds to Gram Panchayats by the Finance Commission, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has made the preparation of GPDP a mandatory in activity by Gram Panchayats (GPs).
 - The Ministry had framed Model GPDP Guidelines in 2015 and subsequently, the new restructured comprehensive GPDP Guidelines 2018 were put in place.
- The sectoral fund allocation for GPDP is limited to few areas where core funding is provided either from Central or State Finance Commission Funds and Schemes like *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)*.
 - Allocation in the areas of road construction, water, and sanitation is comparatively higher in percentage to other sectors.
- The guidelines of all the Centrally Sponsored Schemes which are implemented at GP level such as MGNREGA, DAY-NRLM, SBM(G), POSHAN, etc., clearly insist on the preparation of plans at the GP level.

Capacity Building

- As part of planning and development process, MoPR lays great emphasis on Capacity Building and training of Elected Representatives (ERs) and other stakeholders through its flagship scheme of *"Rashtriya Gram Swaraj" Abhiyan* launched in 2018.
- Since 2018, this exercise of GPDP preparation has been taken up in a mission mode through the People's Plan Campaign (Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas) annually across the country.

Conclusion

- In conclusion, with convergence in planning and implementation of development programmes and integration of community-based organisations, Line Ministries with the democratic institutions, and people-centric approach of the development plans will lead to building up of physical, financial, social and capital, and long term sustainable development at the village level.

Waste Management & Rural Planning

Palle and Pattana Pragathi initiatives of Telengana

- Palle and Pattana Pragathi are initiatives in the State of Telangana to involve public participation in the holistic development of the villages.
 - Both these initiatives sought to tackle the problem of irregular collection of household waste by sanitation workers, unscientific disposal in landfills, and a gap in awareness on modern methods of solid waste management among the general population.
- *The Solid Waste Management (SWM)* initiative firstly includes the creation of a *DRCC (Dry Resource Collection Centre)* and *compost shed* along with the purchase of a tractor and trolley for exclusive use by the panchayat.
- Over the four phases of *Palle Pragathi Programme*, a drive to educate every citizen on the household segregation of dry and wet waste and reduction of single-use plastics has been implemented, leading to the achievement of between 70-80% segregation at source being achieved and sustained.
- Similarly, emphasis was laid on the timely and regular collection of household waste, designation of specific days for the collection of dry and wet waste, and the dissemination of information along with names and phone numbers of the local sanitation teams through wall paintings (titled 'parichayam' or introduction) in every ward, while also ensuring that every village adheres to the 1:500 norm for the recruitment of sufficient sanitation workers (designated as MPWs or multi-purpose workers).
- These efforts have led to a human rights-based approach to waste collection.

Waste Disposal

- The village tractor is used to transport waste to the DRCC and compost shed, where the wet waste is composted using vermin composting and the dry waste takes segregated form into various components.
- A dedicated staff is deployed at the DRCC to monitor the creation of compost, and segregate dry waste as it arrives as a part of the proceeds from the recovery of glass and plastic waste going towards their salaries.

Rural planning for Rearing of animal

- The issue of rearing of animals within the village habitation was dealt with through the construction of the cattle and goat shelters under the *National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)*.

- These animal hostels have been constructed away from the village habitation by pooling the lands of individual beneficiaries and ensuring economies of scale.

Programme for upgradation of existing social infrastructure

- *Anganwadis and Primary Health Centres (PHCs)* was taken up with a special emphasis. The objective was not only to create more usable and robust facilities but also to inject new energy into the daily life of rural populations through facilities.

Greening and climate change management

- Under the third vertical of greening and climate change management called '*Haritha Haram*' or *green garland*, the State has allocated targets for plantation to every district and department of the government, with the allocated target for 2021-22 being the plantation of over 20 crore saplings.
- A primary focus under this programme is to carry out *MLAP (Multi-Layer Avenue Plantation)* in a saturation mode, along every major road, village approach road, and internal roads in the State, with the objective of creating aesthetic, and shaded avenues, and implicitly to reduce noise and air pollution in the villages lining the roads in consideration.
- The programme envisages the creation of '*Palle Pragruthi Vanalu*' or *village parks* of 1 acre or more, in every GP.
 - These parks include a walkway, dense Miyawaki plantations and spaces for leisure, and not only have come to the focal point of social gatherings and recreation in the villages but also have formed the green lungs of the village.
- *Pattana Pragruthi Vanalu (BPPVs) or mandallevel village parks* are the latest in the *Palle Pragruthi* programme.
- The fourth component under this vertical is the *distribution of 6 plants per household in every village in the State* under the drive to achieve plantations in homesteads.

Fiscal discipline

- Under the vertical of fiscal discipline, the disbursement of funds to GPs has been rationalised with every village receiving their entitled grants by the 1st of every month; this information is also displayed transparently on the walls of the Panchayat Office and is updated regularly.
- This regularity in fund disbursement has been coupled with the preparation of annual and 5-year development plans wherein the Gram Sabha identifies, prioritises, and allocates timelines for the implementation of developmental schemes, leading to better planning and monitoring outcomes.

Enhancing public participation in developmental activities

- The Telangana Panchayat Raj Act, 2018 requires the constitution of 4 Standing Committees in every village, each supervising the facets of sanitation. It further states that these committees should be apolitical bodies meant to increase public engagement with governance.

Conclusion

- These initiatives aim to achieve what has been stated in the letter and spirit of the 73rd Amendment of the Indian Constitution, ultimately leading to a rural landscape consisting of dynamic, democratic, healthy, and Progressive villages.

Localising SDGs for Panchayats

Introduction

- The *Sustainable Development Goals* were agreed upon in September 2015 to energise the world and to show direction for its priorities and actions for the next 15 years- to radically reduce poverty and inequality.
 - These ambitious goals aim to end poverty, tackle inequality once and for all, and find lasting solutions to the environmental challenges faced by the world.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all the UN Member States, sets an ambitious agenda to protect people and the planet, and achieve prosperity for all.
- While these goals are global and universally applicable, countries are expected to prioritise and localise SDG targets guided by the ambition and spirit of the agenda but taking into account national and local circumstances.

- This process of "*Localising the SDGs*" requires tools and policy guidance for States, provinces, and panchayats.

Data Revolution & Data Collection

- Data Revolution refers to the transformative actions needed to respond to the demands of a complex development agenda using data.
 - It also refers to radical improvements of how data is produced, accessed, and used.
- In many governments, data collection is done by an agency of the national government from a predesigned sample of the population and is then analysed using complex scientific methods to yield national aggregate estimates.
- Data collection and analysis has been a highly specialised field that has excluded most citizens and government officials - some of whom are only able to consume reports at best.
- It is in this context that there is a need for decentralising the data revolution where the panchayats manage data for development.
 - For an example, Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) is an autonomous organisation working under the Local Self Government Department, Govt of Kerala
- At the *Panchayat level*, the *data revolution* enables the community to identify and design targets and indicators that make sense specifically in their context.
 - It provides a platform to track the progress that the community makes in achieving its goals.
 - It ensures that everyone gains a voice on development matters.
 - Anyone can examine the panchayat's data as well as generate citizen data that can be used to improve advocacy of their issues based on their realities.

Steps to a Successful Local Self Government (LSG) Level Data Revolution

- Prepare the Ground:** It is important that the ground is prepared for a good Local Data Revolution process. Develop strong communication channels with the community and various department functionaries.
- Organise the Community** and identify community opinion leaders and volunteers who would be willing to serve the community by working with the local government officials on a panchayat-level data initiative.
- Capacity Building through specialised Training.**
- Survey based Data-Collection**
- Receiving Feedback on the Data Collection Process**
- Analyse of the collected data**
- Build Linkages for Development**

Planning and Monitoring SDGs

- *The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) platform* is developed to help track, monitor, and report on the SDGs and Panchayat Development Plans, and other frameworks. It is a user-friendly and web-based digital platform, which will improve communication and coordination gaps.
 - The platform keeps everyone engaged as a one-stop-shop where people can find the latest information and content.



Dashboard for Panchayats

- A data dashboard is a tool that provides a centralised, interactive means of monitoring, measuring, analysing, and extracting relevant insights from different datasets in key areas while displaying information in an interactive, intuitive, and visual way.
 - Through this dashboard, the State, District, and local functionaries can develop targets, and track and monitor the progress on the attainment of SDGs.
 - The dashboard helps to identify innovative sources of data at the local level on a variety of themes, including environment, health, education, agriculture, employment, industry, and energy, etc.

A Model Dashboard



Objectives

- The performance level of each goal with national and State level value:
 - To rank the performance of panchayat based on their achievements across SDGs.
 - To promote healthy competition among the States/UTs .
 - To support the States/UTs in identifying areas that demand more attention.
 - To enable the States/UTs to learn from the good practices of their peers.
 - To highlight data gaps in the statistical system of the States/UTs and identify the sectors in which robust and more frequent data need to be collected.

ISO Certified Gram Panchayats-Kerala Case Study

Introduction

- *International Organization for Standardisation (ISO)* is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies).
- ISO 9001 :2015 is one of the most popular ISO standards for *developing and certifying Quality Management Systems* in an organisation.
 - It can be used by any organisation, large or small, regardless of its field of activity.
 - The certification validity is 3 years with Surveillance Audit conducted every year to ensure the quality of the system developed.

- Studies show that ISO 9000 certification directly affects organisational performance.

Objective

- The *ISO certification project* is intended to develop a quality management system that ensures citizen satisfaction through good governance and delivery of high standard quality services.

ISO Certification: An Overview

- ISO 9001 :2015 sets out the criteria for a quality management system that helps the organisation to satisfy its customers, meet regulatory requirements and achieve continual improvement.
- This standard is based on seven quality management principles that an organisation can apply to ensure quality services and continuous improvement.
- They are as follows:
 1. Customer focus
 2. Leadership
 3. Engagement of people
 4. Process approach
 5. Improvement
 6. Evidence-based decision making
 7. Relationship Management

Benefits/Outcomes

Major benefits/outcomes by implementing a *Quality Management System (QMS)* are listed below:

- a. **Front Office System:** ISO certification ensures a proper front office system that includes facilities for the public, information boards, and front office counter that delivers quality services to the public.
- b. **Record Management System:** A proper record management system has been set up in all the LSGs.
- c. **Infrastructure:** Though the prime focus is not to develop infrastructure, the certification ensure that the office is neat and appealing to both public as well as the employees.
- d. **Service Delivery:** The major focus of the ISO certification project is to ensure timely services to the public as per the citizen charter published by each LSG.
- e. **Citizen Satisfaction:** Citizen satisfaction has increased multi-fold. Citizen feedbacks collected on a regular basis show that citizen satisfaction is very high in Gram Panchayats in Kerala.
- f. **Quality Culture in Organisation:** The mandatory activities such as internal audit and management review (Panchayat Committee reviews the quality initiatives in the Panchayat) have encouraged the engagement of both employees and elected representatives in continuous improvement of services.
- g. **Employee Participation and Satisfaction:** The initiatives like a quality circle (a friendly group of employees formed formally) have ensured the participation of employees of all levels.
- h. **Skill Development:** The quality management system insists on conducting at least one employee training every month. This improved the skill set of employees as well as efficiency of front office functioning.

Conclusion

- ISO 9001 certification of Gram Panchayats was a step forward towards ensuring the world standard quality in services for the public. It does not end with just an ISO 9000 certification, rather it is the beginning of many other quality initiatives.
- The initiatives to develop an indigenous quality management system for LSGs, which will include standards for every process of the local governance system and service delivery is in the discussion.
- This could serve as a benchmark for every LSG across the nation.

Digital Local Governance

Introduction

- The *e-Panchayat* is one of the Mission Mode Projects (MMP) under the *National e-Governance Plan (NeGP)*, to completely transform the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)- making them more transparent, accountable, and effective as organs of decentralised self-governing institutions.
 - The project aims to automate internal workflow processes of more than 2.5 lakh panchayats across the country.

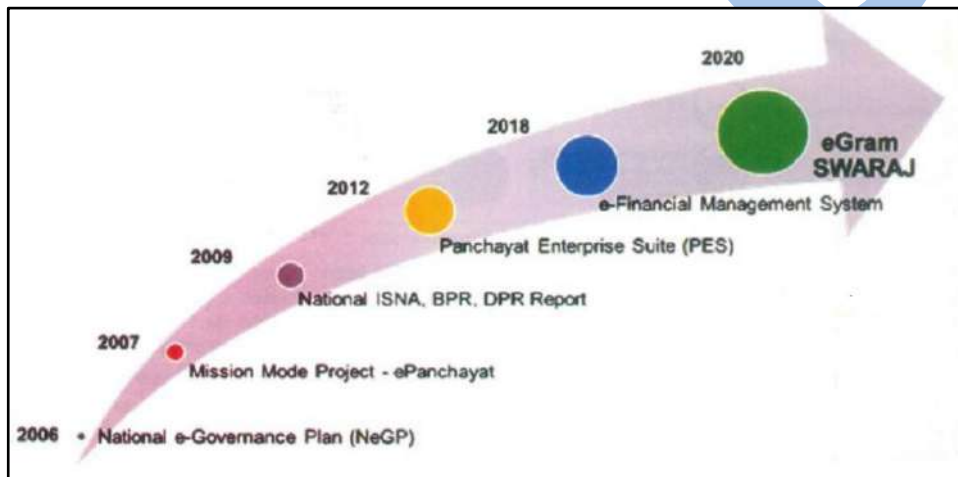
- It is meant to improve local governance and make the working of democracy effective at the grassroots level.

Background

- The Government of India has been leveraging technological interventions to address the challenges posed by the pandemic, and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have played a pivotal role in responding to the transmission of Covid-19 in rural areas.
- The pandemic has established the key role of technology and data-driven decision-making. Hence, it is important to upscale the national efforts towards the adoption of frontier technologies in the government functioning, to the lowest level.

The Timeline of e-Panchayats

- Panchayat Enterprise Suite (PES)** : In 2009-10, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj commissioned a comprehensive study covering all States and UTs to identify all the Information and Services Needs of the stakeholders viz. Central Ministries, State Departments, panchayats, and its citizens.
 - This led to the identification of 12 Core Common Applications that addressed all aspects of panchayats' functioning viz. from internal core functions such as Planning, Monitoring, Implementation, Budgeting, Accounting, Social Audit, etc. to citizen service delivery like the issue of certificates, licenses, etc.



- The *e-Panchayat suite of applications* was launched by the Prime Minister on **24 April 2012**, celebrated as **National Panchayati Raj Day**.
- To strengthen e-Governance in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), *eGram-Swaraj*, a Simplified Work- Based Accounting application for Panchayati Raj has been developed by amalgamating the functionalities of currently available applications in the e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project (MMP).

e-Governance

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is committed to using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to facilitate Panchayats in functioning effectively and empowering the panchayat functionaries to utilise technology in their day-to-day operations.
 - It is further realised that there is a strong need to build a "Digital Inclusive Society" where large sections of the rural population can benefit from new technologies; can access and share information and services freely, and can participate in the development process more effectively.

Government Interventions

- MoPR has consistently brought different ICT interventions to promote convergent delivery of services for the citizens.

Some of the major interventions are given below:

- eGramSwaraj (eGS)**: It is a *Simplified Work- Based Accounting Software for PRIs*, providing a single platform for all planning and accounting needs including various other aspects of Panchayat functioning (monitoring, asset management).

- This application is developed with an aim for tracking every expenditure incurred for each of the activities proposed under *the Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDs)*.
- The application brings in transparency, accountability, and real-time monitoring of the GPDP.
- b. A mobile app was also launched, providing various information such as :
 - Elected Representative,
 - Panchayat activities (total works, ongoing works, completed works),
 - Receipt and Expenditure details for respective panchayats.
 - Panchayat activities (Activity name, scheme name, and amount)
 - Receipts and Expenditure (consolidated) for selected FY.
- c. **eGramSwaraj-PFMS Interface (e-GSPI)** launched in 2018 for enhancing transparency and accountability, integration of accounting module of *e-GS and Public Financial Management System* was carried out to provide an interface for the Panchayats to make online payments viz. expenditure incurred under Central Finance Commission.
- d. **Geo-tagging of assets:** MoPR has developed *mActionSoft- a mobile-based solution* to help in capturing photos with *Geo- Tags (i.e., GPS Coordinates)* for the works which have the asset as an output. This would provide a repository of information on all works and assets related to natural resource management, water harvesting, drought proofing, sanitation, agriculture, check dams, and irrigation channels, etc.
- e. **Gram Manchitra (Geo-spatial planning application):** Gram Manchitra was launched in October 2019, as a spatial planning application for facilitating and supporting GPs to perform planning at the GP level with the use of Geo-spatial technology.
 - This application is also linked with *Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) report, Mission Antyodaya (MA)* and MA gap analysis, and Resource Envelope allocated to the Gram Panchayat.
 - All this information is available in one window, which will support/assist the Gram Panchayat users in better visualisation of works during planning.
- f. **Audit-Online:** Further strengthening financial management and transparency of Panchayats, *Audit Online* was launched on 15 April 2020, subsequent to the recommendation of the Fifteenth Finance Commission.
 - Central Finance Commissions time and again have emphasised ensuring the availability of audited accounts in the public domain.
 - To begin with, it was decided to carry out the audit of 20% GPs in each State for Fourteenth Finance Commission accounts for the year 2019-20.

Conclusion

- In the post-Covid-19 era, the utility of having robust governance systems have been highlighted and the role of data collection and management has been widely recognised.
- Platforms such as eGram-Swaraj can strengthen the data collection and governance architecture in the rural sector, viz. eGram-Swaraj application can serve as a unifying platform for sharing list of beneficiaries from other Ministry/department schemes.
- The aforesaid interventions are bound to enrich the local governance framework of the country and contribute to the technological prowess of the Panchayat functionaries.
- Consequently, the efficiency and effectiveness of Panchayati Raj Institutions are bound to improve, contributing to India's goal of becoming Atmanirbhar in the upcoming years.

People's Plan

- The Panchayati Raj System has come into existence through a long process of evolution and connotes decentralised democracy in India. They may be viewed as institutions of self-governance that would facilitate the participation of the people in the process of planning and development.
- Development of rural areas with an objective to improve the economic and social wellbeing of life of the rural populace is a comprehensive and multidimensional concept, encompassing the development of agriculture and allied activities, socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities, and above all, the human resource development in rural areas.
- The process of decentralisation has been highly variable across the States, *The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) partners with the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)* to utilise the *Mission Antyodaya Survey* and identify critical gaps during the planning exercise.

People's Plan Campaigns

- a. **Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP):** The Ministry rolled out the first *People's Plan Campaign* as 'Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas' from 2 October to 31 December 2018.
- Since 2018, more than 91% of Gram Panchayats (GPs) have successfully created their *Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs)* for the subsequent year. In 2020, MoPR achieved a record number of 95% GPs with GPDPs.
 - During the campaign, the *Local Area Planning* has been reinvigorated, and structured Gram Sabha meetings have been held at the grassroots level for preparing GPDP for the FY 2022-23.

Components

- The GPDP planning process targets development challenges existing across three interrelated dimensions in rural India.
- Economic dimension:**
 - To alleviate poverty and create employment opportunities.
 - Providing both capacity and opportunities for the poor and low-income rural households to participate, and to benefit from the economic growth process of the country.
 - Social dimension:**
 - Social development of poor and low-income households and disadvantaged groups, eliminating inequalities in social indicators, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and providing social safety nets for vulnerable groups.
 - Political dimension:**
 - Providing opportunities for the poor and low-income people in rural areas, including women and SC and ST communities to effectively and equally participate in the panchayat processes at the village level and beyond.

Village Poverty Reduction Plans (VPRPs)

- VPRPs are an integral part of the village development programme wherein activities are taken up to eradicate poverty-related problems.

Gram Manchitra

- With a data-driven approach for sustainable development, '*Gram Manchitra*', a *GIS-based planning application*, has been adopted by all Gram Panchayats.
- Mandatory Geo-tagging of assets has been enabled in eGramSwaraj application.

Impact

- The Campaign has strengthened the role of elected Panchayat leaders and women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)* in a functional Gram Sabha.
- The *Public Information Boards* to be installed in the Gram Panchayats will lead to transparency regarding utilisation of funds placed at the disposal of Gram Panchayats for development under the various schemes.
- The ranking of Gram Panchayats based on social and economic development, as done for *Mission Antyodaya Gram Panchayats*, will help in identifying gaps at village and Gram Panchayat level, and emphasise evidence-based and Gram Panchayat level, planning and implementation for GPDP.

Way Forward

- To ensure holistic planning via the inclusion of all Central and State level schemes, MoPR has mandated all Gram Panchayats to add the amount of funds received for the year. The districts have been advised to help and support their respective GPs in the same.
- The *National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR)* has also been a collaborator with MoPR in providing capacity building and training support for PRIs.

Community Livelihood Support

Introduction

- The central focus of country's poverty reduction initiatives is livelihood development of the poorhouseholds (HHs) through adoption of sustainable practices.
- In the context of making poverty reduction measure more effective, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India adopted 'Livelihoods Approach' for elimination of rural poverty and restructured *Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)* into *National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)* in FY 2010-11.
 - The NRLM encourages need-based intervention for the poor who belong to different occupational fields in diverse agro-ecosystems and expands the scope of evolving a sustainable model of extension services through involvement and leadership of women SHG-based institutions.
 - SHG-based institutions have emerged with inevitable organisational strength, and the State appropriately utilised a scope to enhance its social capital in fulfilling the mandate of NRLM.

Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture-extension model

- *Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture (CMSA)* has been introduced under *Anandadhara* in 2015, to address the specific need of the poor farming community through improvement of farm-based livelihoods.
 - The name CMSA itself implies that the initiative encourages and supports the "community" meaning SHG-based Institutions that are being promoted under NRLM in rural West Bengal as key stakeholders or changemakers in farm and farm-allied livelihood scenario.

Features of CMSA

- SHG-based Institutions (Sangha Samabay Samitis as it is called in the State) at the Gram Panchayat level have been considered as prime stakeholders of community-managed extension system.
- Exchange of knowledge and transfer of skill for improved system are regarded as core principles for all the activities.
- For intensive facilitation, a team of trained *Community Resource Persons (CRPs)* is attached with these Institutions for certain period.
- Focus on improvement of production system, mitigation of risk and cost through adoption of environment friendly, cost reducing technology, and use of unutilised natural resources.
- Convergence of input and services from line departments and research institutions is given utmost priority.

Methodology in Field Execution

- CMSA is being implemented through a team of CRPs which is headed by one Sr CRP or team leaders.
- CMSA team is generally deployed for 3 consecutive years in a particular block.
 - On completion of one year in each Sangha Samabay Samiti, the CRP team identifies *Progressive Mahila Kisans (PMKs)* capable to serve that area even after the team's withdrawal.
 - Thus, livelihood community cadre is developed by SHG-based institutions.

Focus Areas for Future

The areas which need more focus are:

- Availability of inputs required for organic farming is a vital hindrance to the farmers in continuing eco- friendly practices.
- Poultry feed, routine vaccination of birds and animals, fish feed, processing of mustard and pulses, optimum utilisation of water bodies are major areas where improvement needs to be achieved.
- Considering vital need of the inputs like bio- inoculants, vermiculture, and other useful material, Govt needs to intervene to ensure availability of the material through establishment of bio-lab in decentralised mode, particularly utilising the infrastructure of KVKs.
- Huge potentiality of self-employment can be harnessed for input production and service delivery in farm and allied sector. Cottage-level establishment, if properly designed and financed, can absorb substantial number of educated youth in emerging sectors of employment.

Conclusion

- Addressing heterogeneity and diverse need is a challenge for any development initiative in our country.

- Community-based institutions have been given priority for the last few decades to strengthen the institutional base for better management and effective delivery of services and above all, inclusion of the community wisdom in the entire process of innovation towards change.
- CMSA model, though initially designed in top-down delivery mode, undoubtedly widens a chance of developing a community's own strategy and internalising the necessity.

IEC (Information, Education, Communication) Activities in Panchayats

Introduction

- The Panchayati System has been an integral part of our culture and Civilisation. Since ancient times, an ideal governance system has been functioning in Indian villages through the institution of panchayats and the justice delivered by 'Panch-Parmeshwar'.
- It has strengthened our rural life and the economy so much that, even the most enormous upheavals and disasters in the world cannot affect it.
- Despite limited resources, these ancient panchayats also had their own system of information and communication.

Background

- In the post-independence period, through the *73rd Amendment of the Constitution*, the Gram Panchayats have been vastly empowered by mandating the *Panchayati Raj System* and the basic infrastructure.
- Today, panchayats are the institutions responsible for economic development and social justice in rural areas and play an important role as agents of village transformation.
- Panchayats are the final convergence point of all the schemes of the government.
- They play an essential role in taking all the plans and programmes of the government to about 65 per cent of the population of the country.
- Thus, Gram Panchayats play their part in disseminating information of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, and all the Ministries/Departments.

Ministry of Panchayati Raj

- The *Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India*, is engaged in creating, encouraging, and facilitating the information needs of Gram Panchayats to play an important role in issues of national importance.
- The *e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project* launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to implement and empower the e-governance system in PRIs is very effective and result-producing.
- The *state-of-the-art communication services* are being extended to villages by connecting panchayats with optical fibre, to fulfil the objectives of Digital India.
 - Under Bharat Net Scheme, the laying of optical fibre has been completed in 1,73,079 GPs so far.

Creating Public Awareness

1. **Publicity System:** The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, State Governments, and PRIs have played an important role in containing the spread of the Corona pandemic in rural areas by using a well organised publicity system.
- The IEC material sent to the panchayats has proven to be very helpful and useful in setting up quarantine centres in rural areas, providing first-aid to patients, and implementing *Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan* and *Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana*, launched for the welfare of migrant workers and needy returning from the cities.
2. **Vaccination Campaign:** The steps taken by the panchayats for awareness creation have played an important role in the successful implementation of the Covid-19 vaccination campaign.
3. **Role of Gram Sabha**
 - *Gram Sabha* has been considered as the grassroots and decentralised unit of our democratic setup.
 - It is essential for self-governance, transparent, and accountable functioning of Gram Panchayat.
 - It is the forum that ensures direct participatory democracy.
 - It is defined by the *Constitution (Article 243B)* to include all registered voters of a village within the area of a Gram Panchayat.
4. **GPDP :** A provision has been made in the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission (grant period 2015-2020) to use the grant fund to create the *Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP)*.
 - Efforts have been made to ensure maximum public participation in the formulation of GPDPs, and the suggestions for development plans have come through Gram Sabhas.

- Public participation in this vital field is being scaled up through IEC activities.
- 5. **Online Dashboard:** It is a powerful medium of information and communication in today's digital age. MoPR has also played a leading role in the development of Dashboards.
- 6. **The Computer Training and Information Centres:** They are providing computer education to the children and making the information of various schemes of the government accessible to the people.
- 7. **Gramoday Sankalp Magazine:** Gramoday Sankalp, a quarterly magazine published by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, is a medium of communication, education, and information delivery to the panchayats.
 - The magazine is published in 11 regional languages and Hindi and English.
 - It makes the schemes of the MoPR accessible to the masses in a simple manner besides publishing the activities of Panchayati Raj Institutions, innovations by panchayats, success stories, and best practices of Panchayats.

KURUKSHETRA

Index

1. Reinvigorating Sports in Rural Areas.
2. Women Participation in Sports.
3. Rural India-Sporting Optimism and Hope.
4. Importance of Health and Fitness in Sports.
5. 'Atithi Devo Bhava': Growth of Indian Tourism Sector.
6. Development of Sports in Rural India.
7. Boosting Rural Sports Infrastructure.
8. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Towards Affordable Housing.
9. Revolutionizing Sports Training through Technology.

Reinvigorating Sports in Rural Areas

Introduction

- Sports have always been a part of the common life in India for ages. There are several pieces of evidence of the existence of vibrant sports activities in India.
- Our epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata are full of incidences of sports such as archery, wrestling, horse-riding, chariot racing, etc. For instance, wrestling has been a highly popular sport even during the times of Mahabharata.
 - Known as Malla-yuddha, it saw participation from legendary characters such as Bhima, Balram, and Jarasandha - who have been mentioned as the greatest wrestlers in the epic.
- Rural India is abundant with sports and games which are local and unique in each state.
 - These games and sports have served multiple purposes - keeping people fit, maintaining harmony, channelising the youth's energy in constructive areas, keeping them away from substance abuse, and pulling the youth out of poverty, among many other benefits.

Background

- The recent success of India at the Olympics is a commendable achievement. Many 'firsts' were achieved, and medal droughts ended.
 - India bagged its highest ever *medals (7)*.
 - Neeraj Chopra brought India its first gold in athletics in men's javelin.
 - India ended a 41-year medal drought in hockey by winning a bronze.
 - While Meera Bai Chanu lifted a billion Indian hopes with a silver medal at the Olympics, she also gave India's first-ever opening day medal at the Olympics.
 - Ravi Dahiya, Bajrang Punia, and Lovlina Borgohain wrestled and boxed out to win a silver and two bronzes at Tokyo Olympics.
- A common thread that binds these athletes apart from their spirit of excellence and service to the nation - is their rural background.

A Short history of Rural Sports: Some of the other early rural sports which have withstood the tide of time and continue to attract youth from rural areas

a) Mallakhamb:

- The Ultra-Gymnastics Mallakhamb is an ancient Indian version of gymnastics where a gymnast performs aerial yoga and gymnastic posture atop or with a standing pole.
- The sport is hugely popular in rural pockets of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, and requires immense stamina, practice, and discipline to perform.
- One of the earliest written descriptions of Mallakhamb can be located in the memoirs of the Chinese traveller Huen-Tsang dating seventh century CE.
- The Mallakhamb World Championship 2019 held in Mumbai attracted participants from 15 countries such as USA, England, Germany, France, Japan, Singapore, Italy amongst others.
- It was performed in the Olympics for the first time in the year 1936.

b) Kalaripayattu: The Ancient Indian Martial Art:

- Kalaripayattu or simply Kalari, is an ancient Indian martial arts form that can be traced back to the Sangam period in southern India. A scientific sport, it requires great mind-body coordination and agility using kicks and swings while attacking and protecting with spears, shields, swords, etc.
- It's a martial arts training used to prepare warriors in ancient times.
- It follows a guru-shishya parampara where students (shishya) train under a master (guru) in training centers (called Kalari).
- The Kerala Government has established the Kalaripayattu Academy in 2021 which will offer training of Kalari in a formalised way through a dedicated syllabus that has been crafted for the purpose.

c) Qila Raipur Sports Festival: India's Rural Olympics:

- It is an annual sporting event that promotes local rural sports of Punjab through competitions in the district of Ludhiana, Punjab.
- The festival aims at giving a platform for the budding talent in professional games as well as creating a sporting culture in the area.

Government Intervention and recent Trends

- The Government of India, in recent years, has taken several initiatives such as Khelo India, TOPS Scheme, etc. to build India as a sporting nation with a great amount of emphasis in the rural areas.
- While these initiatives are commendable, there is a long way to go in creating a bustling sports culture in India - rural and urban both.
- a. **Evolution and growth of female wrestling :** The young girls and women from rural India have role models who are like them, come from similar backgrounds, and overcame challenges to succeed.
- The legend of the Phogat sisters has changed the outlook of patriarchy, many have become champions of gender equality and promote girls sports.
- A new generation of female sports wrestler like Sakshi Malik (the first Indian female wrestler to win a medal at the Olympics) have come up, performing exceedingly well at the national and international forums.

Initiatives to Strengthen Sports in Rural Areas

1. The Target Olympic Podium Scheme or TOPS

- It was launched in 2014 under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), GOI to provide financial assistance and other help to athletes in their pursuit of medals in the Olympics and other international sporting events.
- In addition to best coaching and equipments, each athlete was provided with Rs.50,000 monthly out-of-pocket expenditure which could be spent on their diet or training or any other way the athlete desires.
- Sports such as archery, badminton, boxing, hockey, shooting, and wrestling have been recognised as 'high priority' sports under the scheme.
- The *Rio 2016 Olympics* saw TOPS awardees P V Sindhu and Sakshi Malik clinching silver and bronze respectively for India.
- The para olympians covered under TOPS won four medals at Rio including two gold medals.
- The TOPS' impact was best to be seen at the *2018 Commonwealth Games* where 47 out of the 70 medals won by India were bagged by TOPS awardee athletes.

2. Khelo India Scheme

- The Government of India has designed a future-looking scheme to develop a pool of talent from the remotest part of the country through the Khelo India Scheme.
 - It is aimed at mainstreaming sports as a tool for national, economic, community, and individual development.
 - The scheme was launched in 2018 with 12 verticals.
 - A zonal approach has been taken by the government in the identification of talent.
- Under the Scheme, talent search has been started at the grassroots level in two categories,
 - a. Sports potential talent identification
 - b. Proven talent identification.
- Each *Khelo India Centre* notified under the Scheme at district levels in various States/Union Territories are eligible to receive Rs.5 lakh per discipline as a one-time grant and Rs.5 lakh per discipline as a recurring grant.
- Under the scheme, *Khelo India Games* are organised to provide a platform to the budding talent at the school and university level.
 - Till now, three such games have already been organised and the fourth one is going to be held in Haryana.

**UPSC
IAS/IPS
CLASSROOM
PROGRAMME
2022 & 2023**

₹1,30,000



Case Study: Haryana

Why Haryana?

In the recently completed Tokyo Olympics, Haryana sent the maximum Olympians in the Indian contingent - 31 athletes, which is nearly 25 percent of the total contingent.

- Three of them brought gold, silver, and bronze medals and many were part of the victorious Indian hockey team.

Formal System- Play for India

- With the motto '*catch them young, catch them right*', Haryana conducts *Sports and Physical Aptitude Test (SPAT)* in all the schools across the state to identify the high potential athletes in 8-19 age groups.
- Participants are administered a battery of standardised tests in three rounds and the qualifiers enter the final round called the *Sports and Physical Exercise Evaluation and Development (SPEED) Test* where they select a particular game based on their aptitude and counselling.
- Those who clear the SPEED test are admitted into *Sports and Physical Aptitude Continuous Evaluation (SPACE)* where they are trained into sports academies.

Financial Assistance

- A monthly stipend of Rs.1500 and Rs.2000 per month is awarded to the students in the age group 8-14 years and 15-19 years respectively.
- In addition, cash rewards for successful Athletes right from national champions to Olympians have been given by the Haryana State Government.

3. **National Education Policy 2020:** The existing schemes of the Government of India such as the *Samagra Shiksha, Eklavya Model Residential Schools, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalyaya*, etc have a special emphasis on promoting sports in the remotest part of the country.

Way Forward

- It has to be emphasised that sport is a scientific discipline and requires a strategic roadmap to develop future talent and infuse a sporting culture in India.
- There are certain sports where Indians have a comparative advantage either because of their genetic build or the prolonged assimilation within certain sports.
- It might be useful to start a campaign namely One State One Sport, where each state government will identify a major sport in which it has a competitive advantage along with other sports which may be accorded a little lesser priority.

Conclusion

- The tradition of sports is deeply rooted in the Indian culture dating a few millennia back.
- Over the years, India has emerged as a major force to reckon with in certain sports in the international arena. However, the sporting culture is limited to few pockets of the country which also happen to be the nursery of athletes in India.
- Sports have to be a part of a child while growing up.
 - *The National Education Policy 2020* offers a window of opportunity to integrate sports as a non-alienable part of the curriculum in schools and colleges.
 - The network of schools and colleges makes a perfect platform to scale sports to reach each household.

Women Participation in Sports

Introduction

- Outstanding and award winning performance of Indian women contingent in recently concluded Tokyo Olympics has generated immense excitement, joy, pride and commemoration across the country.
- Several countries have been continuously investing substantial resources and providing best facilities to develop and sustain sports talent at the highest level as it is one of the important indicator of the quality of human development in any country.

- However, just like every other sphere of life, women have had to fight for equality in the field of sports as well, making the history of women in sports a tumultuous one.
- India also had the same situation. The participation of the Indian women in sports was negligible.
 - The societal framework was historically biased against the females, especially when it was practically considered a taboo to be a female athlete in the country.
 - However, the rise of women in sports in India has been nothing but gradual.

Background

- Indian women made the journey to the Olympic Games happened in the **1924 Paris Olympics**, when two women athletes from India took part.
 - The four subsequent editions of the Games saw nil participation from Indian women spanning two decades - 1928 to 1948.
- With the Second World War having just concluded and India gaining Independence in 1947, A contingent comprising of 60 men and 4 women represented India in the **1952 Summer Olympic Games** held in **Helsinki**.
- The sports scenario for women started changing when **P.T. Usha** emerged on the sports era as one of the greatest athlete the country has ever produced.
- The win of **Karnam Malleswari**, the first Indian women who won a bronze medal in the **2000 Sydney Olympics** in women's 69 kg category in weightlifting, started the illustrious journey of women in Olympics.
- Thereafter, the bronze medal win of **Mary Kom** and **Saina Nehwal** in **London Olympics in 2012** and Silver medal of **P.V. Sindhu** in badminton and Bronze medal of **Sakshi Malik** in wrestling in 2016 Rio Olympics set the scenario of rise of Indian women in Sports.
- In the recently concluded **Tokyo Olympics**, P.V. Sindhu, Saikhom Mirabai Chanu and Lovlina Borgohain made India proud by winning medals and have clearly shown the positive change that is taking place in our country.
 - While, **Saikhom Mirabai Chanu** won the Silver medal at the very first day of the Tokyo Olympics 2020, P.V.Sindhu became the first Indian women to win two Olympic medals. She won the Silver medal in Rio 2016 and in Tokyo 2020 she captured the Bronze medal.
 - Also, **Lovlina Borgohain** achieved her first Olympic medal in Women's welterweight 64-69 kg category of Boxing event, where she got bronze medal.
 - The women hockey team also reached upto the semi-finals in Tokyo Olympics and won many accolades.

Government Initiatives

- In 1954, the Indian Government created the **All India Council of Sports (AICS)**. It acted as an advisory body, informing the government on numerous areas including national sports policies, government funding of national sport governing bodies, and the coaching of elite athletes.
- In 1982, a specific government department for sport, **the Ministry of Sport (now the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sport, MYAS)**, was established.
- In 1984, India introduced its first ever **National Sports Policy**. Additionally, the **Sports Authority of India (SAI)** was set up to promote the development of coaches and physical education teachers, participation in sport and physical activity, and infrastructure.
- In 1986, to emphasise the importance of sport and physical education in the education sector, the **National Education Policy** and two distinct government units, **the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sport (NSNIS)** and the **Lakshmi Bai National College of Physical Education (LNCPE)** were introduced.
- **National Sports Development Code of India 2011**, aimed to implement new strategies to achieve objectives set by the previous policies.
- At present, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is running the following schemes to promote sports in the country, including rural, tribal and backward areas: -
 - a) **Khelo India Scheme.**
 - b) **Assistance to National Sports Federations.**
 - c) **Special Awards to Winners in International sports events and their Coaches.**
 - d) **National Sports Awards, Pension Meritorious Sports Persons.**
 - e) **Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay National Sports Welfare Fund.**
 - f) **National Sports Development Fund.**
 - g) **Running Sports Training Centres through Sports Authority of India.**

Challenges for Women in Sports

Sl	Challenge	Details
01	Socio-cultural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are certain roles, responsibilities and expectations from the women in the society. They are supposed to play an important role in keeping family traditions, raising children, sacrificing their own careers for family etc.
02	Inadequate Diet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in sports require a healthy and nutritious diet which is missing in Indian families. Due to limited means, the diet of girls and women is the last priority, even though, wholesome and nourishing diet is the most crucial component for sports.
03	Gender Pay Disparity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a huge Gender Gap as far as payments are concerned which is a crucial demotivating factor in this regard.
Sl	Challenge	Details
04	Access to Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently, India houses approximately 100 sports facilities fulfilling international standards of sports infrastructure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These facilities are largely neglected and ignored in terms of utilisation and maintenance. Also, a majority of the Indian sports infrastructure facilities are mainly used for hosting international, national, state and district-level games. There cannot be increased participation of women and girls if they do not get proper access to the necessary facilities.
05	Safety Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a general consensus that lack of security is the biggest problem for a female player. Parents do not feel comfortable in sending their daughters to participate in events outside their hometown. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hence, the girl players miss out on vital exposure and opportunities to experience competitive sports.
06	Neglecting Sports	There is also fear that the studies and academic performance would get neglected.
07	Lack of Systemic Interventions and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although, there are schemes and endowments for athletes that guarantee a basic minimum standard of living, but it has not been much effective.
08	Lack of Awareness Among the Masses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to promote sports at grass-root level, we really need to focus on changing attitudes and convictions in our communities about playing sports and finding local role models, initiate intensive mass awareness campaigns about the various myths and prejudices surrounding sports and what girls can achieve through it. Further, an exchange of ideas is important on the changing roles and perception of women in our society, and we need to provide safe public spaces for girls to play.






UPSC CSE PRELIMS TEST SERIES 2022

with 12 months subscription of
THE IAS GAZETTE



60 HIGH QUALITY TESTS

Online ₹7900 Offline ₹9999

Sports and Education

FIT INDIA Movement

- It was launched on 29th August, 2019 with a view to make fitness an integral part of our daily lives has been a symbol of paradigm shift in our approach towards sports.
 - The mission of the Movement is to bring about behavioural changes and move towards a more physically active lifestyle.
- It has the following objectives:
 - a) To promote fitness as easy, fun and free activity
 - b) To spread awareness on fitness and various physical activities that promote fitness through focused campaign.
 - c) To encourage indigenous sports
 - d) To make fitness reach every school, college/university, Panchayat/village, etc.
 - e) To create a platform for citizens of India to share information, drive awareness and encourage sharing of personal fitness stories

National Education Policy 2020

- It focuses on sports-integrated learning in classroom transactions to help students adopt fitness as a lifelong attitude and to achieve the related life skills along with the levels of fitness as envisaged in the Fit India Movement.
- It states that the curriculum must include basic arts, crafts, humanities, games, sports and fitness, languages, literature, culture, and values, in addition to science and mathematics, to develop all aspects and capabilities of learners; and make education more well-rounded, useful, and fulfilling to the learner.
- It emphasises on sports integration in pedagogical approaches that utilise physical activities including indigenous sports, in pedagogical practises to help develop skills such as collaboration, self-initiative, self-direction, self-discipline, teamwork, responsibility, citizenship, etc.

Samagra Shiksha Scheme

- Under the centrally sponsored Scheme, Sports Grant on an annual basis to all government schools has been introduced in the year 2018
- In education, at all levels, from primary to Sr. Secondary, *the Gender Parity Index (GPI)* is more than 1, which shows equal or more participation of girl child at school level. Thus, sports have been made an integral part of education rather than an extracurricular activity.

Way Forward

- Sports play a greater role in abolishing gender discrimination and providing women their right place in the society.
- It encourages balanced participation and has capacity to promote *gender equality (SDG Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls)*.
 - Through sport and physical activity, women and girls can be empowered and benefit from the constructive impact that sport has on health and psychosocial conditions.
- The challenge is not the lack of talent or capacity for India to produce great women sportspersons, it is the complications related with bringing in coaches and training persons in rural and tribal areas and providing young athletes with the resources and support they need.
- The sports federations of India need to act more proactively in terms of providing better infrastructure, coaching facilities and transparent system of selection purely on basis of merit to promote sports culture in India.

Rural India-Sporting Optimism and Hope

Introduction

- Sports is an integral part of any nation's identity. The national sport teams competing in the global events, like the cricket or football world cups or competing for the gold in Olympic Games brings out the passion to the fore.
- a. Sports-Economy
 - The global sports market is estimated to have reached the \$458.8 billion in 2019, however due to the onset of the pandemic that affected almost all the economic sectors around the globe, it was believed to be at \$388.3 billion in 2020.

- The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of the sports industry has been 3.4 % since 2015 and the sports market is expected to reach \$599.9 billion by 2025, and \$826.0 billion by 2030.

b. Other Aspects of Sports

- It teaches us to nurture our character and discipline our lives to the healthier and more active lifestyles, which becomes means to achieve both mental and physical wellness.
- The career profiles in the sport industry are getting varied as well such as athletes, coaches, trainers, event managers, public relation officers, Coordinator of sports organisations, marketing consultant etc.

Sports economy in India

- The sports economy in India offers various opportunities to be captured over a period. The scalability of these opportunities is huge as well.
- By 2025, one-fifth of the world's working age population will be Indian.
- By 2030, there will be over 850 million internet users in India.
- By 2035 India's five largest cities will have economies of comparable size to middle income countries today.
- The estimated size of the Indian Sports Industry in 2020 is Rs.5894/-Crore.

Sports Initiatives & Private Participation

- Sports sector has undergone an immense transformation, with series of initiatives by the government in form of "*Khelo India*" to improve the sports infrastructure across the country.
- The private sector has been playing an important role as well by organising leagues and tournaments, scouting and sponsoring talented sports persons at the grass roots level.
- More than a dozen major league-based sports tournaments were launched including Indian Premier League (Cricket), Pro Kabaddi League, Indian Super League (football), Premier Badminton League (PBL) and Hockey India League (HIL).
 - Most of these leagues have acquired much success on ground and has increased viewership to these sports.
 - It has also received much of the help from the online streaming of most of these events and digital marketing through the social media applications.

Role of Local Authorities

- Local Authorities also have an important leadership role to play; bringing schools, voluntary sport clubs, national governing bodies of sport and the private sector together to forge partnerships, unblock barriers of participation and improve the local sport delivery system.
 - Therefore, they have a crucial role to play in delivering sport and physical activity opportunities particularly to the certain groups including women and girls, disabled people and those from lower socio-economic groups, as they are less likely to play sport and be physically active than the population in general.

Indian Movies

- The Indian cinema has been to put forth the discourse that the rural India is epicentre of producing the best of the best sportspersons, representing the nation across the globe.
 - The movies such as Mary Kom, Dangal, Bhag Milkha Bhag, Chak de India are just a few to speak of.
 - The Phogat sisters, which became a household name or MC Mary Kom, who created ripples in the boxing world, are the examples of sports persons coming from rural India.

Benefits for Increased Participation in Sports

a. Health Benefits

- Participation in sports also has a positive impact on the mental well-being of individuals.
 - Physically active participants are less likely to experience depression, have a stronger sense of coherence, and less perceived stress in comparison to those who exercise less frequently.
 - They are more satisfied with their lives and less likely to suffer from mental health problems.
- On the other hand, the role of participation in sports in supporting community-based public health has received considerable attention in recent studies.

b. Benefits in Sports Industry

- Sports has become an integral part of the commercialisation of culture, together with cinema, travel, shopping and eating out, which has come to form part of the mass entertainment industry, closely linked to the mechanisms of market.

c. Entrepreneurship and Infrastructure building

- The growth of the sports industry in India has also provided an opportunity for various Start-ups to take up this particular industry data/content aggregation, education and training, online retail technology, online ticket-booking as sports infrastructure building.

d. Employment Generation

- Another, positive side of the increased participation in the sports activities is the flourishing sports goods industry.

e. Positive Effect on Exports

- The share of Indian exports has also increased manifold, with the improved quality of sporting goods and have created a global identity for these products.
 - Nearly an estimated 60 percent of the total sports good production in India is exported across the globe.

Way Forward

- Sports as a social phenomenon and cultural practice have been extensively and intensely affected by the evolution of urban areas.
 - The cross cultural exchanges, which promotes mutual respect among the participants which provides the huge opportunity for nation building and strengthen the principles of unity in diversity.
- Desired skills and competencies could be achieved by youth development programs focusing on broader developmental needs of youths within their individual and community contexts rather than on a single issue.
 - A comprehensive and holistic approach that addresses challenges facing youths, their families, peer groups, schools, neighbourhood, and community is essential to reinforce new skills and knowledge, is the need of the hour.
- Instead of political goals, people participate in sport and physical exercises for keeping fitness; for entertainment; for communication with friends; for mental health; and for increasing individual physical capability.

Importance of Health and Fitness in Sports**Introduction**

- Health and fitness are crucial for the growth and development of the nation. The multiple policy initiatives introduced for training and development of youth in recent years have focused on their all-round development with a special emphasis on sports, health and well-being.
- From the *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan* which is focussed to improve access to sanitation in the country thereby improving the overall health of the nation, to the *POSHAN Abhiyaan* which focuses on nutrition and *Khelo India and the fit India Movement* which seeks to promote sports across the country, all aspects of health and fitness have been tackled in a comprehensive manner.

Background

- Mahatma Gandhi experimented with hygiene, fasting, abstinence and vegetarianism, he was an early pioneer in many ways of a healthy lifestyle.
 - As an integral part of his philosophy, he believed that individuals should practice self-reliance as a pathway to good health.
 - He also believed that human health and fitness requires a holistic approach – one that integrates all aspects of the mind, body and environment.

Government Initiatives**a. Swachh Bharat Mission:**

- One of the most important aspects of good health is hygiene and sanitation. Launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission ensured proper concentration in this regard.
 - Data from the recent rounds of the *National Family Health Survey* highlights steady improvements in the usage of individual household toilets in rural India.

- While developments in water and sanitation might seem irrelevant to the world of sports, ensuring optimal hygiene and access to sanitation facilities are stepping stones towards creating a healthier future for generations to come.
- b. **POSHAN 2.0**
 - Mission POSHAN 2.0 focuses on a targeted and intensified approach for tackling nutrition with a special focus on vulnerable groups.
 - State Governments are also collaborating with civil society and community-based organisations for generating awareness, promoting household behaviour change and making nutrition a Jan Andolan.
- c. **National Youth Policy, 2020**
 - Mental health has been included as an important focus area in the National Youth Policy, 2020.
 - Robust mental health plays a vital role in fitness and sports as well.
 - In light of the increased stress faced by youth as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative to focus on creating greater awareness among youth to identify mental health problems and enable access to professional help in a timely fashion.
- d. **International Day of Yoga**
 - It held every year on the *21st of June*.
 - Yoga has emerged as a multi-dimensional solution to many health challenges.
 - While modern medicine can cure physical ailments, Yoga effectively prevents pathologies from setting in and helps to tackle inner tribulations by serving as a medicine for the soul.
- e. **AYUSH**
 - AYUSH is promoting the traditional Indian concept of a balanced diet explained in Ayurveda.
 - In 2014, the Government constituted a *Ministry of AYUSH* to harness traditional learning and systems of medicine.
 - *Centres of excellence for Yoga and wellness* have been established.
 - The *Report of the Group of Secretaries on Education and Social Development, 2017* had recommended that physical education in schools should be promoted by making Yoga and sports compulsory.
- f. **Khelo India**
 - Khelo India focuses on providing better sports infrastructure and facilities across the country, leading to the emergence of talented athletes who would make the country proud by their performances in the international sports arena.
 - A Central Sector Scheme with a budget of over Rs. 575 crore in 2019-20, this umbrella program seeks to identify, nurture and train sportspersons across the country.
 - It includes a component of identifying talent in rural India, is focused on creating Centres for Excellence or world-class sports training facilities in the country.
- g. **Fit India Movement**
 - The Movement was launched on 29th August, 2019 with a view to make fitness an integral part of our daily live.
 - The mission of the Movement is to bring about behavioural changes and move towards more physically active lifestyle.
 - Towards achieving this mission, Fit India proposes to undertake various initiatives and conduct events to achieve the following objectives: -
 - To promote fitness as easy, fun and free.
 - To spread awareness on fitness and various physical activities that promote fitness through focused campaigns.
 - To encourage indigenous sports.
 - To make fitness reach every school, college/university, panchayat/village, etc.
 - To create a platform for citizens of India to share information, drive awareness and encourage sharing of personal fitness stories.
- h. **The Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)**
 - It was launched in July, 2014 with the aim of identifying, grooming and preparing potential medal prospects primarily for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
 - Selected athletes are supported under the *National Sports Development Fund* for customised training at institutes with world-class facilities.
 - Financial assistance towards diet, food supplements and equipment has also been enhanced for senior athletes, junior and sub junior athletes.

Let's Play- Action Plan for Revitalising Sports in India

- In 2016, NITI Aayog released 'Let's Play- Action Plan for Revitalising Sports in India'.
 - The document presents a 20-point action plan which highlights key areas for strengthening the sports ecosystem in the country.
- These action points are divided into a short-term vision (4 to 8 years) and a medium to long-term vision (8 to 15 years).
- The action points enlist various initiatives which need to be taken for achieving the desired target of 50 medals in the 2024 Summer Olympics.
- NITI's action Plan makes multiple recommendations include:
 - a. Strengthening infrastructure for Sports through the Public-Private-Partnership mode.
 - b. Dedicating a fixed proportion of expenditure incurred by schools for bolstering sports infrastructure and equipment as well.
 - c. Hosting International events at regular intervals.

Conclusion

- Rural India's talent faced an uphill task in achieving success in the international arena.
- As we look back at our nation's journey in the realm of sports, the significant progress made over the last decade by following Gandhiji's diktats for good health including sanitation and hygiene; nutrition; Yoga and self-reliance.
- The success of programs like Khelo India and Fit India in ensuring that health, fitness and wellness become a priority for all citizens in the country.

'Atithi Devo Bhava': Growth of Indian Tourism Sector

Introduction

- Tourism sector in India is the fastest growing and largest industry in terms of its economic benefits and socio-economic impacts and enabling equity.
- India has been considered as the 'Tourist Paradise' because of its flora and fauna, architectural monuments, music, painting, art and crafts, dances, different cultures and languages, customs/traditions and varied festivals - which no other country in the world, can boast of and/or endowed with.
- Tourism sector contributes about 5 percent to GDP and also creates direct and sustainable employment. Further, it generates foreign exchange earnings through enhancing exports.

Importance of Tourism Sector

- a. **Demand Creation** : Being a consumption-oriented economic sector, it creates a great deal of demand.
- b. **Employment Generation** : It provides both direct employment within the tourism sector and indirect employment in the complementary/derived sectors.
- c. **Role in Foreign Exchange Management**: Tourism sector helps the country in correcting the *balance of payment deficit* through the generation of *foreign exchange* earnings.
- d. **Boosting Revenue Income**: It contributes significantly to our economic growth by fostering new avenues of employment and subsequently contributes to the revenue generation of the economy.
- e. **Equity and Empowerment**: The scope and range of employment in this sector is multi-faceted in nature, as it provides opportunities to all categories/ages including young and old; educated and uneducated; male and female without any discrimination.
- f. **Reducing Pressure from Agricultural Sector**: It being a labour-intensive industry can employ a large number of people, especially migrants from the agriculture sector. Thereby, it helps in reducing a great deal, of pressure from the agricultural sector.
- g. **Alleviating poverty, inequality and unemployment**: It is one of the most preferred sectors for alleviating poverty, inequality and unemployment in diverse and thickly populated country like India. It provides large scale employment to tourists' assistants, hawkers, taxi drivers, tourist guides, photographers, street vendors and provides indirect employment in its derived sectors.
- h. **Market of New products and Services** : It opens-up opportunities and markets for new products and services, which are auxiliary yet important part of integrated development of the region/state.
- i. **Inclusive Development** : It has been contributing to enhanced quality of life, promotes arts/handicrafts and contributes in the increasing awareness about the conservation of environment and cultural heritage.

- The sector has great economic impact on the different forms of employment; and helps in increasing female participation, increase in the social status of workers and better standard of living with increase in social cohesion.
- It brings all kinds of happiness to both the host and the visitors and creates a great place for spreading global peace and happiness.

Some other aspects of the Tourism Sector are following:



Growth Trends of Tourism Sector

- In the pre-COVID period (2009-2019), the tourism sector was flourishing and having a rising trend in terms of its contribution to GDP, employment and foreign exchange earnings.
- The pandemic has adversely impacted the tourism sector globally and India is no exception.
 - Hence there was a drastic fall in tourism activities for about 15-18 months, since march 2020.
- Therefore to boost and revive the sector, the government has been working and shall continue to accelerate the tourism-related activities to bring back the sector into the much-needed track, as it is impacting and contributing to millions of livelihoods, especially the small and marginalised sections of the society.

'Atithi Devo Bhava' Campaign

- The Ministry of Tourism (MoT), Government of India launched a social awareness campaign in 2005, 'Atithi Devo Bhava' which means 'Guest is like our God'.
 - The very purpose of the drive is to extend and ensure good behaviour towards the tourists and make their stay and visit happy and further to motivate the members of the community to demonstrate generous behaviour during visitor's stay.
 - It ensures to provide good experiences and to extend good behaviour towards the tourists and also to improve relationship between the hosts and the tourists.
 - The campaign targets the general public while focusing mainly on the stakeholders of the tourism industry.

SWAN Analysis for the Tourism Sector

- A critical 'SWAN Analysis' (S=Strengths, W=Weaknesses, A=Achievements and N=NextSteps) of the tourism sector in India is done to assess and to suggest the needful interventions and improvement.

Strength	Weakness	Achievements	Next Steps
a. Variety of Govt. Schemes. b. Natural Resources.	a. Lack of Maintenance, cleanliness and hygiene. b. Safety and Security issues. c. Lack of universal food.	a. Natural Diversity.	Marketing needs improvement.

Government Initiatives

- The government under the scheme of '*AtmaNirbhar Bharat*' has launched various schemes in support of tourism development that includes *PRASHAD* and *Swadesh Darshan*.
 - These schemes are especially designed and customised to meet the requirement of the tourist and to promote tourism.
 - *Swadesh Darshan* is an initiative taken by the government to enrich the tourist experiences and to enhance opportunities and to promote lesser known destinations.
 - *National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)* launched by the Ministry of Tourism with a special objective of holistic development of pilgrimage and heritage destinations.
- Other schemes for tourism development include:
 - a. Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development.
 - b. Gap Scheme for Revenue Generating Tourism Projects.
 - c. Capacity Building for Service Provider.
 - d. Domestic Promotion and Publicity including Hospitality.
 - e. Overseas Promotion and Publicity including Marketing Development Assistance.
 - f. Champion Services Sector Scheme;
 - g. Safe Tourist Destination for Women;
 - h. Development of Iconic Tourist Destination etc.
- To minimise the adverse effects of tourism on the environment, the concept of '*Sustainable Tourism*' has been initiated.
 - Government has started new-age tourism which includes *niche tourism* to attract inbound and domestic tourists.
 - The very purpose of the creation of 'Sustainable Tourism' is a kind of shift from 'Seasonal Tourism' to '365 Days Tourism' and to meet the needs of the new customer segments with distinct experiences.
 - Niche tourism undertaken includes: cruise, adventure, wellness tourism, medical, golf and polo, film tourism, health tourism, heritage tourism, eco-tourism, rural tourism and sustainable tourism.

Way Forward

- Government is taking all kinds of measures for the development of this sector, however, it needs to re-formulate and re-energise the tourism policy keeping in view the altering priorities of the tourists in the post-COVID-19 scenario.
 - However, there is an urgent need to further strengthen- the core infrastructures like airways, railways, roadways, and waterways etc., and also need to tighten the safety and security aspects so as to strengthen the tourism sector.
- Peoples' participation must be encouraged and should be done at the local level to make it more people-centric and participatory.
- The digital follow-up and connectivity networks at destinations must be strengthened further to address safety and security issues and to ensure quality experiences of the tourists.

Development of Sports in Rural India

Introduction

- India has a rich heritage of indigenous sports and If we look at the list of medal winners from the Tokyo Olympic Games 2020 and Paralympics 2020, we will find that most of them are from far-flung rural areas of the country, so we can say that sports have deep roots in rural India.
- But there is a great need to establish a small but modern sports training infrastructure at panchayat and district level.

Background

- *Sports is a state subject* and the primary responsibility of the promotion of sports, including identifying young sportspersons and nurturing them to excel in national and international sports events, rests with state governments.
 - Laws for sports are to be made by the States.
 - The funding at the grassroots is done by the states.

- Various sports federations are responsible for the development of sports and generation of funds. They are supported by the Government of India.

Initiatives

- To take sports to the next level, an *Olympic Task Force* of experts from their respective fields was formed.
 - They suggested a roadmap to boost India's performance in Olympic Games.
- The government also introduced programs '*Khelo India*' and '*Target Olympic Podium Scheme*'.
 - In these schemes, government is covering the grassroots and elite sports from small villages to big metro cities.
 - Every male and female athlete puts all of his or her efforts to be included in these schemes.
- India is divided into five zones namely North, East, West, South and North-East Zones to carry out talent identification.
 - **Grassroot Zonal Talent Identification Committees** are formed to reach out to every corner of the country to shortlist potential and proven athletes.
 - Talent Identification is carried out in twenty sports disciplines in the age group of 8 to 14 years, wherein the country has the potential/advantage to excel at the international level.
- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has formulated several schemes to promote sports in the country, including in rural, tribal and backward areas.
- Some of the schemes are as follows:
 - a. Khelo India Scheme
 - b. Assistance to National Sports Federations;
 - c. Special Awards to winners in international sports events and their coaches;
 - d. National Sports Awards, Pension to Meritorious sportspersons;
 - e. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Sports Welfare Fund;
 - f. National Sports Development Fund;
 - g. Running sports training centres through Sports Authority of India.
- The Central Government and many states have decided to start sports universities that will produce world class athletes and also educate athletes in different fields of sports.
 - a. The Union Sports Ministry has started creating sports facilities in Jammu and Kashmir, Leh-Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh in a big way.
 - Central Government has earmarked an amount of Rs. 200 crore under PM Development Plan for the development of playfields and indoor stadiums in the whole UT of Jammu and Kashmir.
 - There will be one highly equipped indoor stadium in each district of Jammu and Kashmir.
 - Union Minister e-inaugurated three highly 'equipped indoor stadiums in Budgam, Pulwama and Anantnag.
 - Sports facilities in these stadiums will run 365 days without getting affected by weather or other disruptions.

Way Forward

- Sports and Education will run together and this will definitely help, in a great way, to the students of rural India as the sports infrastructure and training facilities will improve even in the remote areas and at village level in all the school and colleges.
- If the country has to reach the top in sports, then we have to shed that old fear which was entrenched in the mind of the older generation.
- It is very important for us to come out of this mindset and the feeling of insecurity.

About Sports Authority of India (SAI)

For the development of sports in the rural area, Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous body under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, is implementing the following sports promotional schemes across the country to identify talented sportspersons and nurture them to excel at national and international competitions:

- a. National Centres of Excellence (NCOE),
- b. SAI Training Centre (STC),
- c. Extension Centre of STC,
- d. National Sports Talent Contest (NSTC)
- e. its Sub-Schemes - Regular Schools, Indigenous Games and Martial Arts (IGMA) & Akharas.

Boosting Rural Sports Infrastructure

Introduction

- In India, Sports has been less favoured career prospect for most Indians, but Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics have paved the way for lakhs of aspiring sportspersons.
 - The credible performance in Olympics and Paralympics can be attributed to the role of the Paralympic Committee of India, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS) and collaborations with state governments in augmenting sports infrastructure and training facilities especially in the rural areas.

Background

- As per the constitutional provisions, the promotion of 'Sports' falls on the State subject list, which implies that the responsibility for the development and creation of sports infrastructure lies with the States and Union Territories.
- The role of the central government is to support States and UTs in building infrastructure for promotion of sports amongst youth.
- For boosting sports infrastructure especially in the rural, tribal and remote areas in the country, the MYAS is at present implementing various schemes.

The schemes include

- a. Khelo India Scheme,
- b. Assistance to National Sports Federations,
- c. special awards to winners in International sports events and their coaches,
- d. National Sports Awards,
- e. Pension to meritorious sportspersons,
- f. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Sports Welfare Fund,
- g. National Sports Development Fund
- h. running sports training centres through Sports Authority of India.

Khelo-India: National Programme for Development of Sports

- In 2017, for promoting mass participation in sports and achieve effective implementation, the earlier schemes of Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan (RGKA), Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme (USJS) and National Sports Talent Search Scheme (NWS) were merged into a single scheme to be named as '*Khelo India: National Programme for Development of Sports*'.
- Khelo India drew inspiration from *khel Mahakumbh* - an annual event organised annually by the Government of Gujarat.
- Under the Khelo India programme, one of the verticals, namely, '*Promotion of rural and indigenous/tribal games*' is dedicated to development of rural and indigenous and tribal games in the country.
 - Under this vertical, *Mallakhomb*, *Kaloripayattu*, *Gatko* and *Thong-To* have been receiving support.
 - Koloripoyottu has its origin from Kerala which is practiced across globe and Mallakhamba, practiced mostly in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
 - Gotka originates from Punjab, and this traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors is used both as self-defence as well as a sport.
 - Thong-To is a Manipuri marital art.
 - These sports will get national recognition again with the help of the *Khelo India Youth Games 2021*.

IASOYAN
PREDICT THE UNPREDICTABLE

**UPSC CSE
MAINS
TEST SERIES
2022 & 2023**

APTI PLUS
Academy for Civil Services Pvt. Ltd.

16 High Quality Tests

15 Hrs. Online Classes on Essay and Case Studies (Ethics)

06 One to One Interactive Sessions with our Evaluators

₹18,000

Funds Allocation

- In the union budget (2021-22), Rs.657.71crore has been allocated for Khelo India Scheme as per the Budget Estimates. This allocation includes funds for the purpose of development of sports infrastructure in the country.
- For attaining the goal of 'Creating World Class Sports Infrastructure' approximately 65 percent of the total outlay of the Khelo India Scheme is reserved for creation and upgradation of sports infrastructure.
- According to the 8th *Report of Parliamentary Committee* on estimates, the review of performance of the Khelo India Scheme (2020-21) - the budget allocation for the Scheme was Rs 1,756 crore for the period 2017-18 to 2019-20.

Khelo India Games

- The Khelo India Games, which was organised for the first time in 2018. Since then, a host of Khelo India Games have been hosted, including the Youth, University and Winter Games.
- The program has also encompassed the upgradation of several sports infrastructures across the States and UTs KISCE and KICs.

Khelo India e-Pathshala Programme

- It has been introduced by the SAI wherein the eminent athletes and senior coaches teach different modules in 21 disciplines to improve the technical skills of the grassroots level athletes.

Conclusion

- The positive impact of boosting India's sport infrastructure at the grassroots has started to yield results.
- With the thrust on creating additional sports infrastructures at the grassroots, it is expected to result in India emerging as a major sporting power house in the next decades.

Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Towards Affordable Housing

Introduction

- *Affordable housing* is generally considered to be the houses which meet the needs of households whose incomes and resources are not sufficient to allow them to access appropriate housing in the market. Decent housing has been universally accepted as one of the basic needs of individuals, the family and the environment.
 - As per Government of India, which states "Affordable housing refers to any housing that meets some form of affordability criterion, which could be income level of the family, size of the dwelling unit or affordability in terms of Equated Monthly Instalment (EMI) size or ratio of house price to annual income".
- *The PMAY mission* is aimed at addressing the core issue of the housing shortage throughout the country in an organised and planned manner.
 - It is being implemented by providing central assistance to urban local bodies and other implementing agencies through states and union territories.

Causes behind Housing Problem

- Under the joint family system meant that there was one house for the entire family and all the family members lived in the family home.
 - The trend of migration toward cities in search of job raised the issue of more than a house for a family.
 - The advent of the nuclear family system further exacerbated the situation with parents and children living away from each other.
- In present situations, providing shelter for poor has been a colossal challenge for India, and the problem is more prominent in rural areas.

Constitutional Provision

- Though, the Indian Constitution does not directly guarantee the '*Right to Housing*' but has addressed the importance of shelter through *Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP)* and *fundamental rights* and duties that have a bearing on the right to adequate housing.

International Resolutions

- Various international resolutions such as International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Change Rights; Vancouver Declaration on Human Resettlements, etc., have recognised adequate housing as a part of the right to an adequate standard of living.
- Recognising the need and significance of easy access to housing for deprived is of utmost importance and to fulfil the objective of providing shelter to all, India, in June 1996, became a signatory to the *Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlement*.

Affordable Housing Policy

- Affordable housing (AH) is basically built by private players with government subsidies. The government is incentivising private players to build housing for the identified weaker section of the society.
- The government is focusing on creating viable social housing for at-risk population such as children, senior citizens, vulnerable populations and the disabled, and private developers and not-for-profits obtain a range of subsidies for providing AH.

Genesis of PMAY-G

- The government, in an effort to overhaul the program and for accomplishing its target of '*Housing for All by 2022*', restructured and transformed the *Indira Awaas Yojna (IAY)* into *Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana- Gramin (PMAY-G)* w.e.f. from April 1, 2016, for fulfilment of gaps identified in IAY as outlined in the report of "*the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on Performance Audit on IAY*" (CAG, 2014), and the report on "*Unspent Balances and Flow of Fund Mechanism under Some Rural Development Schemes*".

Aim of the Scheme

- The scheme is aimed at providing a pucca house with basic amenities such as piped drinking water, electricity connection, and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connection, by convergence of different schemes and programmes run by the government, to all homeless and those households living in kutcha and dilapidated houses by 2022.

Nodal Agency

- *The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)* is the nodal agency for proper and effective implementation of the programme and construction of quality houses.

Benefits of the Scheme

- The beneficiaries are provided with the unit assistance of **Rs.1.20 lakh for plain areas** and **Rs. 1.30 lakh for the hilly, difficult, and Integrated Action Plan (IAP) areas**, and the funds are transferred digitally directly to the account of the beneficiary from the single nodal account established at the state level.
- Apart from the unit assistance, they are provided with the option of availing institutional finance up to Rs. 70,000 and are entitled to 90-95 days of employment under *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)*, Rs. 12,000 for constructing toilets under *Swachh Bharat Mission*, etc.

The restructured PMAY-G mission has two phases:

- **Phase-I:** aimed at providing pucca houses to one crore households living in kutcha/dilapidated houses in FY 2017-19.
- **Phase-II:** aims at providing coverage to 1.95 crore households in FY 2020-22, with an immediate target of completion of 60 lakh houses in FY 2019-20.
- The cost was shared between Government of India and State Governments in the ratio of 60:40 for general category states and 90:10 for special category states and IAP districts.
 - The Government of India provides the full cost in respect of Union Territories (UTs).

Selection of Beneficiary

- Instead of selection a beneficiary from among the BPL households, beneficiaries are selected using housing deprivation parameters in *the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011* data which is to be verified by the Gram Sabhas.
 - The SECC data captures specific deprivation related to housing among households.

- The households that are houseless and living in zero, one and two kutchha wall and kutchha roof houses can be segregated and targeted.
- In PMAY-G, programme implementation and monitoring are being carried out through an end-to-end Governance model Using *AwaasSoft and AwaasApp*.
 - AwaasApp - a mobile application is used to monitor real time, evidence-based progress of house construction through date and time stamped and geo referenced photographs of the house.
 - All payments to beneficiaries are transferred through OBT to beneficiary's Bank/Post office accounts registered in AwaasSoft MIS.
- The programme implementation is to be monitored not only electronically, but also through community participation (Social Audit), Members of Parliament (DISHA Committee), Central and State Government officials, National Level Monitors etc.

Budget Allocation and Progress

- For Phase-I of PMAY-G (FY 2017-19), the estimated total fund requirement stood at Rs.1.3 lakh crore, of which Rs. 1.27 lakh crore was approved and Rs. 1.18 lakh crore was released.
- For PMAY-G Phase-II (FY 2020-22), assuming a unit assistance of Rs. 1.3 lakh, the total fund requirement towards the scheme would be Rs. 2.5 lakh crore.
- Total allocation (including central and state assistance) of Rs. 0.61 lakh crore has been made till date, with the Centre:State sharing of 62:38.
- The progress of PMAY-G has been significantly better, with 88% of the sanctioned houses completed under Phase-I of the scheme due to better Central funding assistance.

Critical Issues

- *On the demand side,*
 - a. identification of the right clientele,
 - b. increasing reach through micro mortgage financing mechanisms and self-help groups,
 - c. flexible paying mechanisms to cater to variable income flows.
- *On the supply side,*
 - a. Incentivising through policies (extra-floor space index, free sale areas and so on),
 - b. schemes for slum redevelopment and rehabilitation,
 - c. ensuring adequate availability of land,
 - d. streamlining of land records,
 - e. inclusion of mass housing zones in comprehensive development plans (COPs),
 - f. encouragement to private participation and partnership,
 - g. single window clearance for smaller projects on the lines of large township projects are necessary.

Conclusion

- Rural housing has been one of the top priority areas for the government. The government has made PMAY-G an effective tool to create affordable housing by providing as many as financial support through various schemes and credit facilities to create basic needs in housing.
- PMAY-G is expected to have strong forward linkage with other sectors in the economy, the impact on employment and output can be through direct as well as indirect channels to strengthen rural economy.

Revolutionizing Sports Training through Technology

Introduction

- Sports in India currently stand at the cusp of a technological revolution. By capitalizing on new-age technologies, we will not only be able to produce great athletes but will also bring sports closer to the people.
- While earlier the primary focus in sports was towards the team and the player, the focus has now shifted beyond the playing field.
 - Today, the sporting industry also encapsulates other streams of revenues that may bring in millions in monetary terms such as memorabilia, stadium food, TV rights, sponsorships, media, etc.
- The sporting industry is constantly growing and evolving with the introduction of cutting-edge technology, thereby revolutionizing the way people experience sports.

Background

- The history of sports in India dates back thousands of years starting from Indus valley civilization.
 - The presence of seals and artifacts found from that era points to the fact that Indians played many forms of sports such as chess, dice, hunting and boxing.
- India is one of the most critical emerging nations in the world, presenting many business opportunities in the sports domain.
 - According to a report by Group M ESP, the Indian sports industry amounted to Rs. 5894 Crore in 2020 with the biggest chunk of it being spent on media.
 - Overall cricket made up 87 percent of the total industry, contributing Rs. 5133 Crore.
 - The remaining 13 percent was contributed cumulatively by other sports.
- The sports and fitness goods industry in India has also seen a major jump. Sports goods refer to the clothes and equipment required for participating in sports and preventing related injuries, while fitness goods are a subset of sports goods and are employed during workouts.

Sporting Technology and its benefits

- Sports Technology uses a combination of several new age technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Internet of Things (IoT), virtual and augmented reality, robotics, drones, digitalization, etc., which has drastically helped in improving the overall sports landscape.
- Technology can be used at each stage in the sporting world like broadcasting, fan engagement, state-of-the-art equipment, live performance tracking, etc. and have a significant impact on how athletes practice and compete by using solutions like biomechanical analyses, correct techniques, among other things.
- The use of technology through slow motion replays, database storage and retrieval, as well as comparison with others have helped players vastly improve their game by recording time speed, direction, swing, turn and bounce.
 - For example, cyclists can wear Heads-Up Display (HUD) glasses that deliver information regarding heart rate, speed, incline and other relevant cycling information which can help the cyclist focus and make adjustments while riding.
- During practice sessions, players can use virtual reality and augmented reality to practice their moves or drills in a simulated match-like environment.
 - These technologies shall also be helpful for referees to make correct and accurate decisions through enhanced viewing and access to real-time data.

History of Sports Technology

- In the year 1991, Wimbledon debuted the IBM serve-speed technology followed by the Decision Review System (DRS), a technology-based decision-making system used in cricket in 2008.
- The Spider cam technology was released in 2010, which enables film and television cameras to move horizontally and vertically.
- In 2013, smart racquets were introduced with chips placed in the handle to record data on power and spin.
- The world of football saw an important innovation in 2014 with the goal-line technology, which was debuted during the 2014 World Cup to determine whether a goal has been scored.
- Further in 2016, sensors were introduced which were installed in players jersey to monitor health and aid in injury prevention, followed by smart chips for bats in 2017 to measure speed and angle for analysis purposes.
- Additionally, the Telstar 18 soccer ball with a Near Fields Communication (NFC) chip was released by Adidas during the 2018 FIFA World Cup.
- In 2019, the Indian cricket Board, BCCI had on boarded the UK-based tech company STAT Sports to make use of their Global Positioning System (GPS)-driven performance tracking and analysis.

Opportunities

- Looking at the start-up culture as a potential breeding ground for new possibilities in sports technology, there are several companies across India that have been able to make a mark in this upcoming field.

Conclusion

- In today's world, technology determines the sport, its rules, its creators and the athletes themselves.

- By adapting cutting edge technology in the field of biomechanics, data collection and data analysis for sports, countries like the USA, China and the UK have achieved much success in the global sporting arena and India is surely following suit by making critical progress.
- The government could also look at more ways to incentivize private players to invest in sports technology.
- This will not only help pushing up the level of sports in India but will also be a big boost to the sports industry in the subcontinent alongside revolutionizing sports training through technology.



Introducing

IAS GYAN

PREDICT THE UNPREDICTABLE

An online initiative of **APTI PLUS**

Android Application [Ver 2.0]

REVAMPED & ENRICHED WITH STATE-OF-ART FEATURES!

-  **Peer Discussion**
-  **Download Facility**
-  **Bookmark Option**
-  **AI based Test Series**
-  **Day Night Mode**
-  **Reward in Test Series & MCQs**

Other facilities:

- Live Classes ▪ News & Articles ▪ Daily MCQs
- Videos & Blogs ▪ A to Z Study Materials





APTI PLUS
Academy for Civil Services Pvt. Ltd.