

FORTNIGHTLY MANIFESTO - CURRENT AFFAIRS BY MANIFEST IAS

ISSUE - 15

This fortnightly compilation is of the current affairs write-ups, written by the *faculty of Manifest IAS*, which covers both static and current dimensions of important issues for 1st and 2nd week of August 2019

The write-ups can also be found in the current affairs section on our website:

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HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

Tipu Sultan and the conflicting interpretations of history

Manifest pedagogy: Tipu Sultan is an important ruler of modern India and his defence of Mysore against the British is an issue of importance. Though a controversial question on Tipu's religious policy is not possible in Mains. His reforms and wars can be an area of interest for UPSC in prelims and Mains.

In news: The newly appointed BJP govt of BS Yediyurappa has cancelled the annual event of Tipu Jayanti celebrations observed in Karnataka.

Placing it in syllabus: Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues.

Dimensions: Tipu periodisation

Conflicts with the English- The four Anglo- Mysore wars

Tipu's reform measures and idealism

Tipu's international diplomacy

Tipu's attitude towards people of other religion

Content: Tipu periodisation: (1750-1799)

Tipu Sultan, the Tiger of Mysore, was the Indian ruler who resisted the East India Company's conquest of southern India. He had inherited the throne from his father Haider Ali, who had driven out the previous Hindu dynasty.

He tried to build up an alliance to drive the British – 'those oppressors of the human race' – out of India and intrigued with the French in Paris and Mauritius. Tipu was instructed in military tactics by French officers in the employ of his father, Hyder Ali. In 1767 Tipu commanded a corps of cavalry against the Marathas in the Carnatic (Karnataka) region of western India, and he fought against the Marathas on several occasions between 1775 and 1779.

He succeeded his father in December 1782 and in 1784 concluded peace with the British and assumed the title of sultan of Mysore. In 1789, however, he provoked British invasion by attacking their ally, the Raja of Travancore. By the Treaty of Seringapatam (March 1792) he had to cede half his dominions.

He remained restless and allowed his negotiations with Revolutionary France to become known to the British. On that pretext the governor-general, Lord Mornington (later the marquess of Wellesley), launched the fourth Anglo- Mysore War. Seringapatam (now Srirangapatna), Tipu's capital, was stormed by British-led forces on May 4, 1799, and Tipu died leading his troops in the breach.

Conflicts with the British (Anglo-Mysore wars):

The Anglo-Mysore Wars were a series of four wars fought in India over the three decades of the 18th century between the British East India Company and the Kingdom of Mysore.

First Anglo-Mysore War (1767-1769)

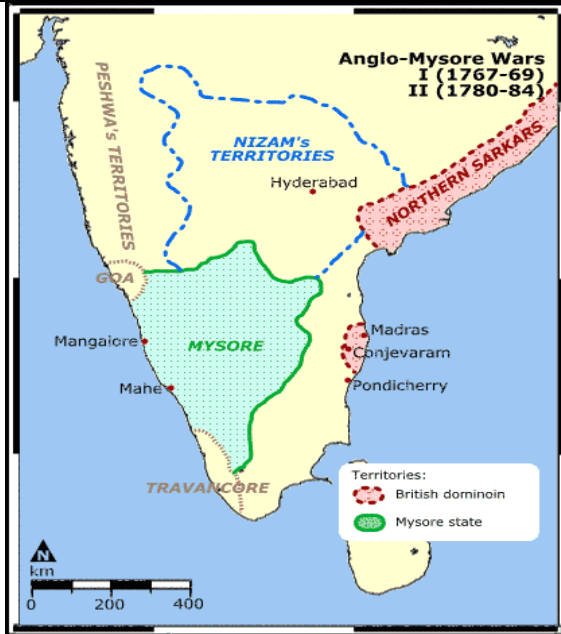
In 1767, Mysore was a powerful state under Hyder Ali. In 1769, the first Anglo-Mysore war was fought in which Haider Ali defeated the British and **Treaty of Madras** was signed between them. Haider Ali occupied almost the whole of Carnatic.

Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-1784)

Warren Hastings attacked French port Mahe, which was in Haider Ali's territory. Haider Ali led a common front with Nizam and Marathas and captured Arcot (Capital of Carnatic State).

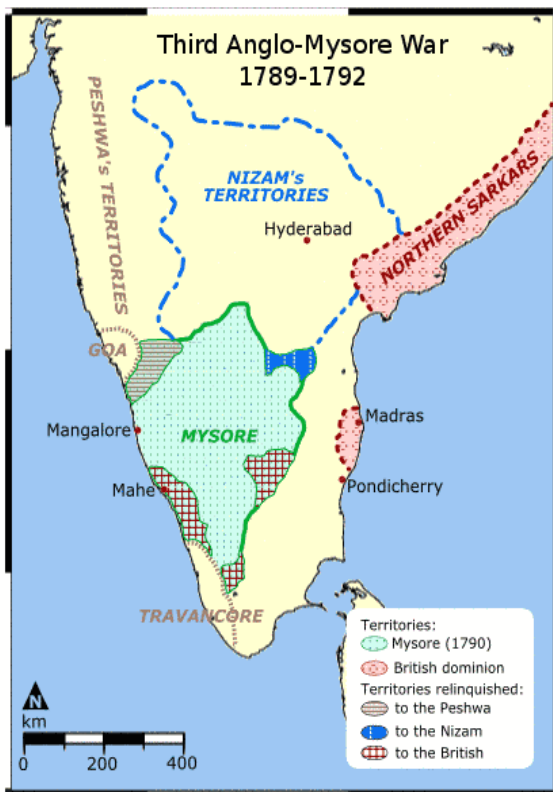
In July 1781, Haider Ali was defeated at Porto Novo by Eyre Coote and saved Madras. In December 1782, after the death of Haider Ali, the war was carried on by his son Tipu Sultan.

Tipu Sultan signed **Treaty of Mangalore** in March 1784 which ended the second Anglo-Mysore war.



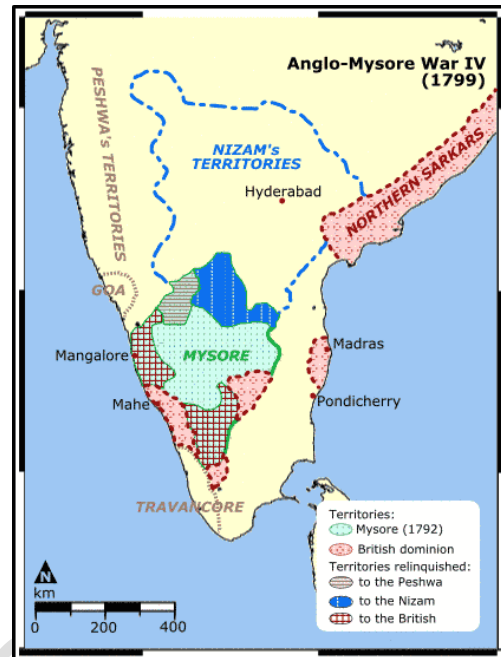
Third Anglo-Mysore War (1789-1792)

The third war was fought between Tipu Sultan, and British East Indian Company began in 1789 and ended in Tipu's defeated in 1792. In this war, Marathas and Nizam aided the British and Cornwallis captured Bangalore. The war ended by signing of **Treaty of Seringapatna**, between Tipu Sultan and Lord Cornwallis. In this treaty, Tipu ceded half of his territories and two of his son's as a hostage of war.



Fourth Anglo-Mysore War (1799)

In Fourth War 1799, the British army led by Lord Wellesley attacked and defeated Tipu Sultan in a fierce war. He met a heroic death on 4th May 1799 while defending his capital Seringapatnam.



Tipu's reform measures and idealism:

Tipu was less worried about form and more about the substance of governance. He considered agriculture as the life blood of the nation and took steps for taking over derelict land and protection of the cultivator and his descendants. He had encouraged the farmers to cultivate commercial crops to overcome poverty and unemployment problems. He had several commercial depots in foreign countries such as Pegu, Muscat, Turkey and Istanbul for selling sandalwood.

He introduced sericulture in Mysore on a large scale and maintained records about the cultivation of sericulture. He was primarily responsible for the construction of well laid out roads and communication facilities. He had given loans and subsidies to the farmers and provided the benefit of land revenue exemption. Tipu also promoted animal husbandry, horticulture, sericulture, social forestry and other branches of agriculture.

Tipu wanted to develop the economy of Mysore State in a different way and make his citizens economically self-reliant and politically sovereign republics. He gave importance for the development of economic bonds between South India and the Persian Gulf. In a letter

addressed to Chief of the factory at Muscat, Tipu had requested the Imam to send Dingies, a small vessel employed in the trade between Malabar Coast and Persian Gulf in return of rice produced in India.

He wrote letters to Muscat to dispatch expert shipbuilders to the Mysore territory. Maldives continued to be an important naval dockyard during his time. Mangalore, Bhatkal, Coondapur and Tadadi became important naval centres of his times. Tipu also invited experts from Turkey, China, France and Iran and set up industries in Channarayana, Bidnur, Chitradurga, Bangalore and Srirangapatna. He had invited Chinese experts for improving sugar manufacturing in his territory. Pearl fisheries were encouraged by him in the Malabar coast. He sent a mission to France to import skilled workers and arsenals in 1785.

He took measures to bring social reforms like ban on the use of liquor and all intoxicants, the ban on prostitution and the employment of female slaves in domestic service, the abolition of the Nayar practice of polyandry in Malabar and Coorg, the repeal of the custom of human sacrifice in the temple of Kali near Mysore town and restrictions on lavish extravagance for marriages, festivals and charities.

His administration saw a strong and well-organized central government, a well-knit district and provincial administration directly under the control of the centre, well-trained and disciplined civil, military and diplomatic services, uniform set of laws and the direct contact between the subjects and the state by the removal of intermediaries.

Tipu's international diplomacy:

Tipu was greatly disappointed when he realized that local powers in India lacked national consciousness. Tipu tried his best to enlist the cooperation of both the Marathas and the Nizam, but none of them recognized the political sagacity and foresightedness of Tipu.

It was this factor which compelled him to develop friendly relations with foreign powers. He appointed trade agents and diplomatic missions to accomplish this goal of diplomacy. He tried to enlist the support of France, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, hoping to form a

formidable front against the English by appealing to their religious sentiments.

He had appealed to the French General to send a strong army of 10000 to be under his authority within India. He was a member of Jacobin club of France. Tipu Sultan had strongly persuaded the French to assist him in the Third Mysore War against the British but they remained neutral because Tipu had initiated a war against the English at the wrong moment.

Tipu made an attempt to cultivate diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Sultan and French King and assured them that they could share the British possessions in South India with him. Turkey did not have either the wish or the capacity to respond to Tipu's diplomatic initiatives and France incurred severe loss in the war with Britain.

Tipu's religious idealism:

Tipu is being considered by many historians as a great secular ruler and a splendid supporter of Hindu temples. He consulted with astrologers of Ranganatha temple, Srirangapatana before his every administrative or war attempts. He gifted the astrologers with lots of money.

Believing, according to the predictions of astrologers, that he could become the undisputed ruler of the whole of South India, after defeating the British, he performed all the suggested rituals in the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple. It is only for the satisfaction of the Brahmin astrologers who used to study his horoscope that Tipu Sultan had patronised two temples. The wealth of many Hindu temple was confiscated before 1790 itself mainly to make up for the revenue loss in the country.

By his six to eight years of presence in Malabar, the entire coastal belt of the region converted to Islam. Some of the largest and wealthiest groups of families of Calicut were converted in mass to Islam. He renamed several places with Islamic tenor. His role in Malabar and Coorg region shows some elements of religious extremism and intolerance.

But after being defeated in the first Anglo-Mysore war he started dealing cordially with the Hindus in his kingdom so as to avoid insurrection and get support in

the face of the British power. The credit of re-consecration of Sharada idol made of sandalwood, the main deity at Sharada Peeta, Sringeri of Chikmagalur goes to him and his contributions to the Peeta are well documented.

When the Peeta came under attack from Maratha army when Sachidananda Bharathi was the pontiff, Tipu Sultan was waging a battle at Kannur in Kerala. On learning about the raid from the Marathas, he sent an army to Sringeri to drive away Marathas. The army was stationed at Sringeri to offer protection from further attacks. According to documentations Tipu brought back Sachidananda Bharathi again to Sringeri and offered donations in huge quantities and got consecrated a sandalwood idol of Sharada.

Tipu Sultan was a ruler of the past and we cannot expect him to be Secular and tolerant in the modern sense. His history shows evidence of both statemanship and tolerance to Hindus along with persecution and forced conversions of Hindus. In his

defence of Mysore against the British he showed the character of the highest order of Patriots. In his reformative and innovative measures he showed the character of a great administrative genius. There is enough evidence in history to celebrate or condemn Tipu Sultan.

But today there is an active project of communalizing history and there is focus on Politicising historical figures. In this project Tipu Sultan is a controversial figure as he can be interpreted both ways. In the interest of Indian National unity and to foster the genuine feeling of tolerance and brotherhood among communities it is better to look at the Tipu's tolerant aspect rather than dividing the communities by bringing forth his intolerant measures. There is a need for constructive use of history.

Mould your thoughts:

1. Though Tipu Sultan's rule is considered controversial in Indian history, his contributions to Mysore state needs to be remembered. Analyse.

INDIAN SOCIETY

Institutes of Eminence (IoE)

Manifest pedagogy: Education as a topic in polity should be studied and consolidated at one place. Under Manifest-11 many articles have been written on this subject. It would be wise if students club all of them and study at once to get a holistic picture

In news: UGC has recommended 20 institutions for Institutes of Eminence (IoE).

Current dimensions: What are IoE

Which institutes can apply?

Importance of IoE

Content: The IITs Madras and Kharagpur, Delhi University, University of Hyderabad, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham and VIT are among the 20 institutions recommended for the grant of the Institute of Eminence status by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

However, the UGC denied the tag to five private universities. Since their exclusion left a vacant slot on the list of private universities given the tag, the Satya Bharti Foundation, Airtel's philanthropic arm became the second greenfield institution to be given IoE status, after Jio Institute of the Reliance Foundation.

The Institute of Eminence scheme is aimed at developing 20 world-class institutions which would put India on the global education map. Those selected will be given greater autonomy and freedom to decide fees, course durations and governance structures. The public institutions will also receive a government grant of ₹1,000 crore, while the private institutions will not get any funding under the scheme.

The **Gopalaswami panel** initially recommended 11 institutions for the tag in July 2018. The Centre had then accepted six recommendations IITs Delhi and

Bombay, IISc Bangalore, BITS Pilani, Manipal University, and the yet-to-open Jio University. In December, the committee recommended 19 more names and asked the UGC to consider all 30 for the tag.

However, following the Ministry of Human Resource Development's decision to limit the scheme to the original 20 institutions — 10 private and 10 public — the UGC was forced to prune the list. It chose to use the criterion of the QS-2020 world rankings, with the QS-2019 India rankings and NIRF rankings used as a tie-breaker. Any institution that did not figure in any rankings was excluded completely.

The UGC's recommendations will now be submitted to the Ministry of HRD for final grant of the status.

What is IoE?

UGC notified 'UGC (Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2017' for private institutions and guidelines 'UGC (Declaration of Government Educational Institutions as Institutions of Eminence) Guidelines, 2017' for public institutions on 07.09.2017 to provide regulatory structure for enabling Higher Educational Institutions to become world-class teaching and research institutions.

Objectives of the scheme:

- to provide for higher education leading to excellence and innovations in such branches of knowledge as may be deemed fit at post-graduate, graduate and research degree levels and award degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions;
- to engage in areas of specialization to make distinctive contributions to the objectives of the university education system wherein the academic engagement is clearly distinguishable from programmes of an ordinary nature;
- to develop the capacity of the students and researchers to compete in the global tertiary education marketplace through the acquisition and creation of advanced knowledge in those areas;
- to provide for high quality teaching and research and for the advancement of knowledge and its dissemination through various research programmes;

- to pay special attention to teaching and research in unique and emerging areas of knowledge, including interdisciplinary areas, which are regarded as important for strategic needs of the country;
- to aim to be rated internationally for its teaching and research as a top hundred Institution in the world over time.

Expectations from the IoE:

- Highly qualified faculty, with freedom to hire from across the world;
- Existence of academic, administrative and financial autonomy;
- Excellence in research;
- High Quality of teaching;
- High levels of funding;
- Adequate financial assistance to meritorious students;
- Selection of students through a transparent system so as to ensure intake of meritorious students;
- A significant proportion of international students;
- Autonomous governance structures;
- Well-equipped facilities for teaching, research, laboratory, administration and student life;
- Tangible and intangible contribution to society;
- Ability to leverage alumni and alternative funding sources, and the autonomy to utilize these resources;
- It should preferably be multi-disciplinary or interdisciplinary and have both teaching and research focus of an exceptionally high quality.
- It should have a good proportion of foreign or foreign qualified faculty.
- The faculty student ratio should be not be less than 1:20 at the time of notification issued declaring an Institution as an Institution of Eminence and should increase over time so as not to be less than 1:10 after five years of this date.
- The IoE should strive to achieve social impact by engaging in applied research and innovation in issues of concern to developing societies.

Which institutes can apply for the status?

The educational institutes selected, need to be a good mix of Central Universities as well as Arts, Management and Technical Institutes. To get the status, they should be among:

1. Top 50 in the National institutional Ranking Framework in their category.
2. Top 500 in internationally recognised rankings like the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

Public Institutes that are eligible to apply under Institutes of Eminence are as follows:

- Central Universities
- Government-owned and controlled Deemed to be Universities.
- Institutions of National importance such as IITs, NITs, etc.
- State Universities set up under a law made by Legislative Assembly of a State.

These institutes need to submit a proposal providing their action plan along with milestones and timelines. Apart from this, the institutes also need to mention the milestones they plan to achieve over the next 5 to 15 years.

Attributes of IOEs that will separate them from other universities:

- The institutes will be free from most UGC regulations which are binding on other universities, except for some flexible guidelines.
- They will not have to adhere to UGC mandated curriculum and would be free to fix their own curriculum and syllabus.
- They would be able to admit 30 percent of foreign students on merit and deciding the fee charged from foreign students will also be their prerogative.
- They can recruit foreign faculty upto 25 percent of its faculty strength.
- They will have the flexibility of course structure in terms of number of credit hours and years to get a

degree, after approval of their Governing Council and broadly conforming to the minimum prevailing standards.

- They shall be free to enter into academic collaborations with other institutions of India.

However, all these facilities will be subject to the University of Eminence meeting the goal of becoming an institution of global repute at the end of fifth and subsequent years failing which they could be penalized by the Empowered Expert Committee to the extent of revoking their eminence tag and reverting them back to their original status.

Importance of IoE:

India has been facing a persistent brain drain due to the belief that Indian institutions are not up to the mark. The number of Indian students flying off to the US, Europe and Australia for their post graduate, and lately even undergraduate degrees has risen sharply.

Foreign degrees cost a packet and are funded by high-cost loans. If India had home-grown Institutions of Eminence, there would be no need to fly abroad for fancy degrees. Indian talents stay within the country and contribute to the growth of the economy.

Academic institutions that can impart high quality education, generate cutting edge research, and attract the best and the brightest from across the globe can have multiplier beneficial effects for the country. So the idea of elevating the best in a sector to an eminent status by granting autonomy is a good one.

Mould your thoughts:

What are the objectives of Institutes of Eminence (IoE) scheme of UGC? What is its importance for India in today's context?

GEOGRAPHY

Floods

Manifest pedagogy: Floods as part of geography and disaster management could be asked in mains. Large parts of India being affected by floods year after year, it could be an important area of preparation for upcoming mains

In news: Different parts of India are affected by heavy rains and floods.

Placing it in syllabus: Disaster and disaster management

Static dimensions: What is a flood

Causes of floods in India

Current dimensions: Regions affected by floods in India

Measures to tackle floods

Content: Flooding is an overflowing of water onto land that is normally dry. Floods can happen during heavy rains, when ocean waves come on shore, when snow melts too fast, or when dams or levees break. Floods are the most common and widespread of all weather-related natural disasters.

Flash floods are the most dangerous kind of floods, because they combine the destructive power of a flood with incredible speed and unpredictability. Flash floods occur when excessive water fills normally dry creeks or river beds along with currently flowing creeks and rivers, causing rapid rises of water in a short amount of time. They can happen with little or no warning.

Densely populated areas are at a high risk for flash floods. The construction of buildings, highways and parking lots increases runoff by reducing the amount of rain absorbed by the ground. This runoff increases the flash flood potential.

Sometimes, streams through cities and towns are routed underground into storm drains. During heavy rain, the storm drains can become overwhelmed and flood roads and buildings. Low spots, such as underpasses, underground parking garages, and basements can become death traps.

Areas near rivers are at risk from flash floods. Dam failures can send a sudden destructive wall of water downstream. Mountains and steep hills produce rapid runoff, which causes streams to rise quickly. Rocks and clay soils do not allow much water to infiltrate the ground. Saturated soil also can lead rapidly to flash flooding.

A deep snowpack increases runoff produced by melting snow. Heavy rains falling on melting snowpack can produce disastrous flash flooding. Thick layers of ice often form on streams and rivers during the winter. Melting snow and/or warm rain running into the streams may lift and break this ice, allowing large chunks of ice to jam against bridges or other structures. This causes the water to rapidly rise behind

the ice jam. If the water is suddenly released, serious flash flooding could occur downstream.

Causes of floods in India:

The most common cause of flooding is the incapability of watercourses to drain away water during an unusually heavy rainfall. Floods however, are not always caused by heavy rainfall. They can result from other natural or man-made phenomena. For instance, inundation in coastal areas can be caused by a storm surge associated with a tropical cyclone, a tsunami or a high tide, Inundation of normally dry areas can be caused by dam failure, triggered for example by an earthquake.

The peculiar nature of India's climate, dominated by monsoons, causes situations where drought and floods may affect different pockets at the same time of year.

The main reasons for floods in India are:

Heavy concentrated rainfall, Cyclone and strong winds and Inadequate drainage

Overgrazing, especially in the foothills, leaves the soil without cover and therefore vulnerable to erosion. Unscientific farming practices like shifting cultivation result in loss of vegetation cover and consequent soil erosion.

Indiscriminate deforestation in catchment areas and upper reaches leads to soil erosion. This in turn causes silting of river courses downstream. A thinned soil cover also results in reduction of infiltration and consequent increase in runoff of large volumes of water.

Regions affected by floods:



The Brahmaputra River Region: This region consists of the rivers Brahmaputra and Barak and their tributaries, and covers the states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura, Nagaland, Sikkim and the northern parts of West Bengal. The catchments of these rivers receive very heavy rainfall and hence floods in this region are severe and quite frequent.

Further the hills, where these rivers originate, are fragile and susceptible to erosion and thereby cause exceptionally high silt discharge in the rivers. In addition, the region is subject to severe and frequent earthquakes, which cause numerous landslides in the hills and upset the regime of the rivers.

The Ganga River Region: The river Ganga and its tributaries cover the states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, south and central parts of West Bengal, Punjab, parts of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi. Most of the damage by floods is caused by the northern tributaries of the Ganga. They spill over their banks and change their courses frequently.

In general, the flood problem increases from the west to the east and from south to north. In recent years, the states of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have also experienced some incidents of heavy floods. The problem of flooding and drainage congestion is getting accentuated due to large-scale encroachment of flood plains of the rivers for habitation and various developmental activities.

The North-west River Region: The Indus and its tributaries carry quite substantial discharges during the monsoon and also large volumes of sediment. They change their courses frequently and leave behind vast tracts of sandy waste. This region covers the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and parts of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan. Indiscriminate use of water for irrigation and development of low-lying areas and depressions has created problem of drainage congestion and water logging over vast areas.

The Central India and Deccan Region: Important rivers in this region are the Narmada, Tapi, Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna and Cauvery. These rivers have mostly well defined and stable courses. This region

covers the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Orissa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and parts of Madhya Pradesh. The region does not have serious flood problem except that some of the rivers in Orissa State namely Mahanadi, Brahmini, Baitarni, and Subarnarekha are prone to floods every year.

The delta and coastal areas of the states on the east coast periodically face flood and drainage problems in the wake of monsoon depression and cyclonic storms. The problem is accentuated when the floods synchronize with high tide. The rivers Tapi and Narmada, are occasionally in high floods affecting areas in the lower reaches in Gujarat.

Floods in India -2019: On 10 June 2019, Tropical Cyclone VAYU formed over the eastern Arabian Sea (Indian Ocean) started moving north towards Maharashtra. In anticipation for the tropical cyclone, NDRF evacuated over 270,000 people from coastal areas in Gujarat. On 17 June, the Depression was weakened into a well marked low pressure area.

Since then, heavy rains and floods have affected most part of Assam. The Assam government has issued a red alert as the flood situation turned extremely critical, displacing tens of thousands and cutting off entire portions of the state. Thousands of people have been moved to relief camps in Assam after flooding caused by the overflowing Brahmaputra, Barak and Jia Boreli rivers. Relief distribution centres are in operation.

Forest officials have said that 95 per cent of the Kaziranga National Park -- home to the endangered one-horned rhino, has been flooded and cases of death of wild animals have been recorded. Animals are seen emerging out of the park to escape drowning.

As of now, around 150,000 people are seeking temporary shelters at camps in different states set up by the Government of India. Thousands of fatalities and injuries have been recorded across Assam, Bihar, UP, Tripura, Kerala, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Maharashtra states. Approximately 33,800 houses have been reportedly destroyed in Assam, Kerala and Rajasthan.

As of 2 August, fatalities have been reported in in Vadodara City (Gujarat State), and over 5,700 evacuated. Most parts of Vadodara remain inundated

and many houses have been damaged, as Vishwamitri river breached its banks and flooded the area. Several crocodiles from Vishwamitri river have ventured in waterlogged residential areas of Vadodara City. Heavy to very heavy rainfall and strong winds will continue to affect Gujarat State.

However, the flood level is receding in Assam and Bihar and health authorities are concerned that there is the risk of a vector-borne disease outbreak, like dengue and Encephalitis.

Flood management: The flood management mechanisms in India at the moment is operational at two levels – central level and state level.

The state level mechanism is made up of the water resource department, the Flood Control Board, State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA), State Technical Advisory Committee. The central level mechanism is made up of bodies such as the Central Water Commission (CWC), the Farakka Barrage Project Authority, the Ganga Flood Control Commission, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Brahmaputra Board.

Other initiatives in order to deal with floods include:

- Policy Statement 1954
- Policy Statement of 1958
- High Level Committee on Floods, 1957
- National Flood Commission, 1980
- Expert Committee to Review the Implementation of the Recommendations of

National Flood Commission – 2003 (Rangachari Committee)

- National Water Policy (1987/2002/2012)
- NDMA Act, 2005

The flood management measures that are being used in India can be broadly classified into engineering or structural measures and administrative or non-structural measures. The engineering measures comprise the following:

- Reservoirs
- Drainage improvement
- Embankments
- Diversion of flood waters
- Channelization of rivers
- Watershed management
- Channel improvement

Some methods of flood control have been practiced since ancient times. These methods include planting vegetation to retain extra water, terracing hillsides to slow flow downhill, and the construction of floodways. Other techniques include the construction of levees, lakes, dams, retention ponds to hold extra water during times of flooding.

The administrative measures include flood plain zoning and flood proofing.

Mould your thoughts:

1. What are flash floods? Explain the causes of floods in India.

Brief about the flood prone regions of India. Discuss the flood management mechanisms employed in India.

Deep Sea mining

Manifest pedagogy: With depletion of resources over the continents, ocean has emerged an important potent region of resources for human utility. The exploration and exploitation of marine resources has led to many marine resources across the world. Marine resources and related issues are important from mains perspective.

In news: India's ambitious 'Deep Ocean Mission' is all set to be launched this year.

Placing it in syllabus: Distribution of resources

Dimensions: Bottom relief of Indian Ocean

Marine resources of Indian Ocean

International Seabed Authority (ISA)

Deep Ocean mining mission

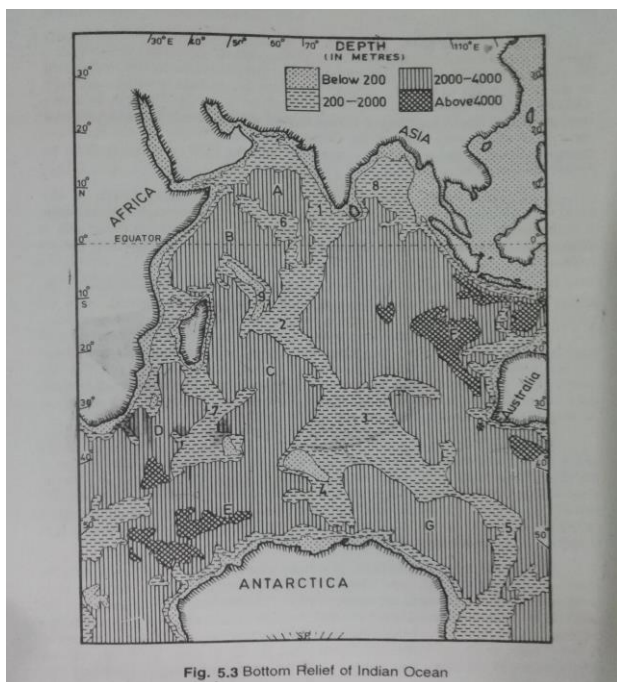
Criticisms

Content: Deep Ocean mission is a proposed ₹8,000-crore project to explore the deep ocean minerals and is expected to start in October, 2019.

Bottom Relief of the Indian Ocean:

The Indian Ocean covers 20 % of the total area of all the oceans of the world. It is a warm ocean blocked on three sides by the continents of Africa, Asia and Australia. The shape of the ocean is compact, with bold and regular coastlines.

In the south it extends up to the Antarctica continent where it merges into the Atlantic and the Pacific. The average depth of the ocean is 4000 m which is less varying and comparatively lesser than that of other oceans.



Continental Shelf: The continental shelf of this ocean is generally narrow with an average width of about 96 km. However, in the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea the width of the shelf varies from 192 km to 208 km. On the seaward margin of the shelf, the depth of water lies between 50 and 200 meters.

Due to intense glaciation the structure of the shelf adjoining the Antarctica has become very complex. In such areas the landward margins of the shelf are 150-200 m deep, whereas the seaward margins register depth varying from 400 to 500 meters. In the tropical areas different types of coral reefs such as, fringing reef, barrier reef and atoll are found on the shelf.

Continental slope: The continental slopes on the outer margins of the shelf are marked by the extreme steepness, angle of slope varying from 10° to 30°. The continental shelves are characterized by many submarine valleys and canyons.

Ridges and Basins: The Indian ocean has a continuous central ridge, called the Arabic-Indian Ridge, together with its southern extension, the Kerguelen-Gaussberg Ridge, which connects with the Antarctic continent. The central ridge separates the eastern basin from the western basin. All the oceanic islands in this ocean are situated on the central ridge and on its cross ridges.

The Ocean is characterized by having many broad submarine ridges, separating several individual basins of the abyssal plain. One of its most distinguishing features is the presence of the series of curving ridges in the north-west segment of the ocean. The above-mentioned ridges divide the Indian Ocean into three distinct parts: 1. African part, 2. Australian part, and 3. the part adjoining the continent of Antarctica.

Oceanic Deep: Out of the total area of Indian Ocean, about 58.8 % forms deep sea plain between the depth of 4000-6000 m. Unlike the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, the oceanic deeps with unfathomable depths are lacking. The **Sunda Deep near Java** is an exception. The depth of this oceanic deep is 7450 metres.

Islands: Relative to the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean, the number of islands in the Indian Ocean is far less. Some of the islands are supposed to be parts of the mainland like Madagascar and Sri Lanka.

Marginal Seas: Since the coastal areas of the Indian Ocean are generally plateaus, there are only two real marginal seas in this ocean: the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The Red Sea occupies a rift-valley between the continent of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. The Red Sea is separated from the Indian Ocean by a submerged sill across the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb. The Persian Gulf represents a shallow trough, which is practically enclosed and separated from the open ocean by the northward projecting Oman Peninsula. Due to this peninsula, the Strait of Hormuz has become very narrow, its width limited to only 80 km.

Marine resources of Indian Ocean: The Indian Ocean Region is abundant with resources like **fisheries, aquaculture, ocean energy, sea-bed mining and minerals**, and provides tremendous economic opportunities to develop marine tourism and shipping activities.

Among these resources, fisheries and minerals are the most commercially viable industries. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report states that while other world oceans are nearing their fisheries limit, in certain areas, the Indian Ocean's resources have the potential to sustain increased production.

It is necessary for India to tap the enormous potential of the Ocean based Blue Economy, which will propel the nation into a higher growth trajectory. The development of Blue Economy can serve as a growth catalyst in realizing the vision to become a \$10 trillion economy by 2032. Additionally, the Indian Ocean Region is of strategic importance to India's economic growth as the most of the country's oil, and gas is imported through the sea.

Polymetallic nodules and polymetallic massive sulphides are the two mineral resources of commercial interest to developers in the Indian Ocean. Typically found at four to five km in water depth, polymetallic nodules are golf-to-tennis ball-sized nodules **containing nickel, cobalt, iron, and manganese** that form over millions of years on the sediment of the seafloor.

India is the first country to have received the status of a pioneer investor in 1987 and was allocated an exclusive area in Central Indian Ocean Basin by United Nations (UN) International Seabed Authority (ISA) for exploration and utilization of nodules. India is one among the top 8-countries/ contractors and is implementing a long-term programme on exploration and utilization of Polymetallic Nodules through Ministry of Earth Sciences.

The **Polymetallic Nodules programme** is oriented towards exploration and development of technologies for eventual extraction of nodules from the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) allocated to India. ((Apart from the CIOB, polymetallic nodules have been

identified from the central Pacific Ocean known as the Clarion-Clipperton Zone)).

India was given an area of about 1.5 lakh sq km in the CIOB for nodule exploration in 1987. In 2002, India signed a contract with the ISA and after complete resource analysis of the seabed 50% was surrendered and the country retained an area of 75,000 sq km.

The Polymetallic Nodules Programme consisting of **four components:**

1. Survey and Exploration,
2. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Study,
3. Technology Development (Mining) and
4. Technology Development (Extractive Metallurgy).

Participating Institutions are:

- National Centre for Antarctic & Ocean Research, Goa.
- National Institute of Oceanography, Goa.

International Seabed Authority (ISA):

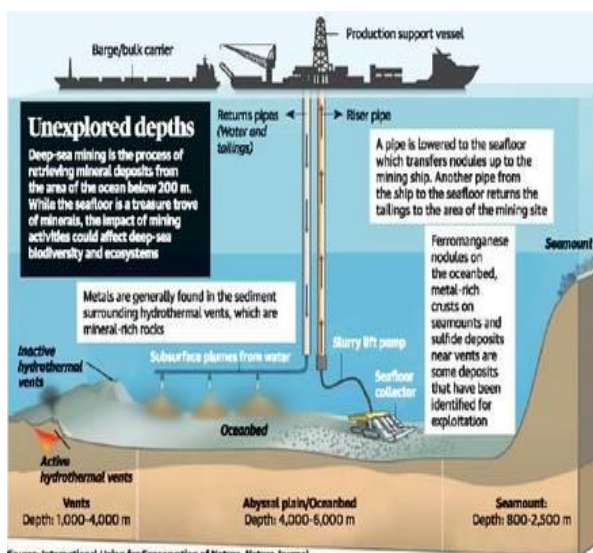
- The ISA is an **autonomous international organization** established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- The Authority is the organization which organize, regulate and control all mineral-related activities in the international seabed area beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.
- It regulates deep seabed mining and ensure the marine environment is protected from any harmful effects which may arise from mining activities.
- The Authority, which has its headquarters in Kingston, Jamaica, came into existence on 16 November 1994, upon the entry into force of the 1982 Convention.
- The Authority became fully operational as an autonomous international organization in June 1996.
- There are 168 members of the International Seabed Authority as at 25 July 2017.
- India is a party since 1995.
- In the year 2000, it adopted regulations governing exploration for polymetallic nodules.

According to the ISA's website, it has entered into a 15-year contracts for exploration for polymetallic

nodules, polymetallic sulphides and cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts in the deep seabed with 29 contractors. Later it was extended for five more years till 2022. China, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Russia and also some small islands such as the Cook Islands, Kiribati have joined the race for deep sea mining.

Deep Ocean mission:

- The central government has drawn up a five-year plan with a cost of ₹ 8000 crore for mining, researching and studying about the ocean floor that can help in forming solid decision on climate change and develop a desalination plant, powered by tidal energy and a submersible vehicle that can explore depths of at least 6,000 m (20,000 ft).
- One of the main aims of the mission is to explore and extract polymetallic nodules.
- These metals can be extracted and used in electronic devices, smartphones, batteries and even for solar panels.



- According to a release from the Ministry of Earth Sciences, the estimated polymetallic nodule resource potential in this area is 380 million tonnes (MT), containing 4.7 MT of nickel, 4.29 MT of copper, 0.55 MT of cobalt and 92.59 MT of manganese.

- Further studies have helped narrow the mining area to 18,000 sq km which will be the 'First Generation Mine-site'.
- India's mining site is at about a depth of 5,500 metres, where there is a high pressure and extremely low temperature.
- The mining technology with artificial nodules at 500 metres depth have already been developed and demonstrated.
- A Remotely Operated Vehicle and In-situ Soil Tester in the depth of 6,000 metres have been deployed.
- More tests are being conducted to understand how to bring the nodules up to the surface.
- A riser system comprising an umbilical cable or electromechanical cable and a hose is being developed.

Criticisms:

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), these deep remote locations can be home to unique species that have adapted themselves to conditions such as poor oxygen and sunlight, high pressure and extremely low temperatures. Such mining expeditions can make them go extinct even before they are known to science.

The deep sea's biodiversity and ecology remain poorly understood, making it difficult to assess the environmental impact and frame adequate guidelines. Environmentalists are also worried about the sediment plumes that will be generated as the suspended particles can rise to the surface harming the filter feeders in the upper ocean layers. Additional concerns have been raised about the noise and light pollution from the mining vehicles and oil spills from the operating vessels.

Mould your thoughts:

1. What are Polymetallic nodules? What are the measures taken by India to extract these nodules?

INDIAN POLITY

NIA Amendment Bill

Manifest pedagogy: This particular news item has to be read with other articles in the Manifest-11 initiative on Terrorism and issues surrounding Nationalism Security Act etc to get a comprehensive worldview surrounding the issue described below.

In news: NIA (Amendment) bill, 2019 cleared by both the Houses of Parliament.

Placing it in syllabus: Security agencies and their mandate

Static dimensions: Provisions of NIA Act
Indian Polity- Fundamental Rights

Current dimensions: Amendments to the Act
Concerns about the bill
How will it help?

Content: The Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha have passed The National Investigative Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2019 which gives NIA officers power to investigate offences committed outside India too, and mandates the setting up of Special Courts. The bill is awaiting President's assent to become an act.

Provisions of NIA Act

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is a central agency established by the Indian Government to combat terror in India. It acts as the **Central Counter Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency**. The agency is empowered to deal with terror related crimes across states without special permission from the states. The Agency came into existence in December, 2008 with the enactment of the NIA Act 2008. It was created post 2008 Mumbai terror attacks as need for a central agency to combat terrorism was realised.

- ✓ The Agency has been empowered to conduct investigation and prosecution of offences under the Acts specified in the Schedule of the NIA Act.
- ✓ A State Government may request the Central Government to hand over the investigation of a case to the NIA, provided the case has been registered for the offences as contained in the schedule to the NIA Act.
- ✓ Central Government can also order NIA to take over investigation of any scheduled offense anywhere in India.
- ✓ Officers of the NIA have all powers, privileges and liabilities which the police officers have in connection with investigation of any offense.

NIA (Amendment) Bill, 2019

The Bill amends the National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act, 2008. The Bill says it wants to facilitate the speedy investigation and prosecution of Scheduled Offences, including those committed outside India against the Indian citizens or affecting the interest of India and to insert certain new offences in the Schedule to the Act as Scheduled Offences which adversely affect the national security.

Key changes in the bill

Scheduled offences The schedule to the Act specifies a list of offences under Acts such as the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, and the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), 1967. The Bill seeks to allow the NIA to investigate the following offences, in addition (i) **human trafficking, (ii) offences related to counterfeit currency or bank notes, (iii) manufacture or sale of prohibited arms, (iv) cyber-terrorism, and (v) offences under the Explosive Substances Act, 1908.**

Jurisdiction of the NIA The Bill states addition, **officers of the NIA will have the power to investigate scheduled offences committed outside India**, subject to international treaties and domestic laws of other countries. The central government may direct the NIA to investigate such cases, as if the offence has been committed in India. The Special Court in New Delhi will have jurisdiction over these cases.

Special Courts The Act allows the central government to constitute Special Courts for the trial of scheduled offences. The Bill amends this to state that the **central**

government may designate Sessions Courts as Special Courts for the trial of scheduled offences after consulting the Chief Justice of the High Court under which the Sessions Court is functioning. Further, state governments may also designate Sessions Courts as Special Courts for the trial of scheduled offences.

Concerns about the bill

- Several opposition parties have alleged that the bill will be used specifically against people of one religion.
- The objectivity of the organisation itself is doubtful.
- When there is no Data Protection Act or the definition of terrorism how an act of violence be designated as a terrorist act?
- As the bill seeks to increase the jurisdiction of NIA to investigate scheduled offences committed outside India, opposition blamed that the Union government was attempting to turn India into a "police state" with a bunch of legislations beginning with the NIA Amendment Bill.
- The provision of widening of the territorial ambit of the law, extending to foreign countries is criticized as concept of universal jurisdiction does apply only in cases of crime against humanity or genocide.
- It is appalling to note that majority of those who are charged under Anti-terror laws (TADA Act, UAPA Act, NIA Act) till date are the people belonging to SC,ST and minority communities.

However opposition MPs who objected to the amendments ended up voting in favour of them as the parties did not want to come across as being 'pro-terror'.

The government has assured that the bill will not be misused against any community on the basis of caste, religion and region. Home minister iterated that it was necessary to pass the bill in order to send out a message that Parliament is unanimous in the fight against terrorism.

How the amendment would help?

- It gives India's anti-terror agency power to investigate cases of terrorism targeting Indians as well as Indian assets abroad.
- The amendments will allow the NIA to probe cyber-crimes and cases of human trafficking which are posing to be serious crimes these days.
- This was imperative for the government's policy of zero-tolerance against terrorism.

Mould your thoughts:

1. Why was National Investigation Agency (NIA) constituted? What powers it derives from NIA Act? What are the key changes proposed in NIA (Amendment) bill, 2019? What are the concerns regarding the provisions of the bill?

Human Rights Bill

Manifest pedagogy: As parliament is in session the work done during the session becomes important. There is a plethora of Bill's being passed - Human Rights Bill, UAPA bill, Surrogacy bill etc. The provisions of all these Bills become important. Most Bills are being passed without discussion. So questions regarding increased productivity of the bill without an informed discussion may be explored by aspirants.

In news: The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019 has been passed by both Houses of Parliament.

Static dimensions: National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)
Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993

Current dimensions: Provisions under the amendment bill
Criticisms of the bill
Possible impact of new amendments

Content: The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2019 amends the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. The Act provides for a National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), State

Human Rights Commissions (SHRC), as well as Human Rights Courts.

NHRC:

- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India is a Statutory public body constituted by the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.
- It is responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights, defined by the Act as "Rights Relating To Life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants".

Section 3 of the Act lays down that the Commission shall consist of:

- A Chairperson
- One Member who is, or has been, a Judge of the Supreme Court of India
- One Member who is, or has been, the Chief Justice of a High Court
- Two Members to be appointed from among persons having knowledge of, or practical experience in, matters relating to human rights
- In addition, the Chairpersons of four National Commissions of (1. Minorities 2. SC 3. ST 4. Women) serve as ex officio members.

The Chairperson and the members of the Commission are appointed by the President of India, on the recommendations of a Committee consisting of:

- The Prime Minister (chairperson)
- The Home Minister
- The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha
- The Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha
- The Speaker of the Lok Sabha
- The Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha

The president can remove the chairman or any member from the office under certain circumstances.

Powers and Functions

- Proactively or reactively inquire into violations of human rights or negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant.
- by leave of the court, to intervene in court proceedings relating to human rights.
- make recommendations about granting relief to the victims and their families.
- review the safeguards provided by or under the Constitution or any law for the time being in force

for the protection of human rights and recommend measures for their effective implementation.

- review the factors, including acts of terrorism that inhibit the enjoyment of human rights and recommend appropriate remedial measures.
- to study treaties and other international instruments on human rights and make recommendations for their effective implementation.
- undertake and promote research in the field of human rights.
- engage in human rights education among various sections of society and promote awareness of the safeguards available for the protection of these rights through publications, the media, seminars and other available means.
- encourage the efforts of NGOs and institutions working in the field of human rights.
- requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office.

Limitations of the Commission

- NHRC can only make recommendations, without the power to enforce decisions. This lack of authority to ensure compliance can lead to outright rejection of its decision.
- It is often viewed as a post-retirement destinations for judges, police officers and bureaucrats with political clout.
- Bureaucratic functioning, inadequacy of funds also hamper the working of the commission.
- Under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, human rights commissions cannot investigate an event if the complaint was made more than one year after the incident. Therefore, a large number of genuine grievances go unaddressed.

Provisions under the amendment bill:

1. Composition of NHRC: Under the Act, the chairperson of the NHRC is a person who has been a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The Bill amends this to provide that a person who has been Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or a Judge of the Supreme Court will be the chairperson of the NHRC.
2. The Act provides for two persons having knowledge of human rights to be appointed as members of the NHRC. The Bill amends this to

allow three members to be appointed, of which at least one will be a woman.

3. Under the Act, chairpersons of various commissions such as the National Commission for Scheduled Castes, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, National Commission for Women are members of the NHRC. The Bill provides for including the chairpersons of the National Commission for Backward Classes, the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights, and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities as members of the NHRC.
4. Chairperson of SHRC: Under the Act, the chairperson of the SHRC is a person who has been a Chief Justice of the High Court. The Bill amends this to provide that a person who has been Chief Justice or Judge of the High Court will be chairperson of the SHRC.
5. Term of office: The Act states that the chairperson and members of the NHRC and SHRC will hold office for five years or till the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier. The Bill reduces the term of office to three years or till the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier.
6. Act does not allow for the reappointment of members of the NHRC and SHRCs. The Bill makes the chairman and members eligible for re-appointment.
7. Powers of Secretary-General: The Act provides for a Secretary-General of the NHRC and a Secretary of a SHRC, who exercise powers as may be delegated to them. The Bill amends this and allows the Secretary-General and Secretary to exercise all administrative and financial powers (except judicial functions), subject to the respective chairperson's control.
8. Union Territories: The Bill provides that the central government may confer on a SHRC human rights functions being discharged by Union Territories. Functions relating to human rights in the case of Delhi will be dealt with by the NHRC.

Criticisms of the bill: Opposition criticised the bill stating that the legislation will ensure that only the government's nominees are appointed to the NHRC. Under the initial NHRC law, its two non-judge members had to be "persons having knowledge of or experience in matters relating to human rights". The number of such members has now been raised to three

including a woman member. However the provision of keeping the coveted positions open to any person of the government's unguided choice remains unchanged.

International human rights jurisprudence is a fast-growing legal discipline and there is no scarcity of eminent scholars specialising in it. But successive governments have never considered any such specialist nor any known human rights activist for membership of the commission.

To the list of national commissions whose heads are NHRC's ex officio members have now been added two more commissions along with the chief commissioner for persons with disabilities. The commission will thus have more adjunct than full-time members. It would have been more fruitful to associate with NHRC representatives of a few leading NGOs, promoting human rights in general.

With a view to ensure the independence of the commission, the Act prohibits further government employment for its chair and members. But this practice was broken with the first commission itself, when two of its sitting members were given gubernatorial positions overnight, and continues till date. The new amendment bill does not disturb the related provision of the Act.

The NHRC's main function is to inquire into complaints of "violation of human rights or abetment thereof" but it cannot execute its decisions based on its findings. For that, this high-profile body has to depend on either the central or state government or on the judicial hierarchy in the country from the top court down to magistrates. The new amendments does not touch these statutory provisions.

Under the amended law, the government's choice for the NHRC chair will not be limited to former chief justices of the apex court but it can now hand it over to any of the Court's retired judges. Only time will tell whether the wide extension of the government's options in selecting the NHRC chief is a change for the better or worse.

Mould your thoughts:

1. "National Human Rights Commission(NHRC) is a toothless tiger". Analyse.

Giving voice sample does not violate privacy

Manifest pedagogy: The article below on the rights under article 20 of the Constitution- though may not be an issue in Mains but it has higher relevance with respect to prelims. Questions surrounding the issue may be asked!

In news: In a significant judgment, the Supreme Court recently held that a judicial magistrate is empowered to order a person to give a sample of his voice for the purpose of investigation.

Placing it in syllabus: Fundamental rights

Static dimensions: Fundamental rights under article 20 (more focus on right to self incrimination)
Right to privacy and Puttaswamy case

Current dimensions: What is the case and the judgement?

Content: Recently a three-judge Bench, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi, has said that directing a person to part with his voice sample to police was not a violation of his fundamental right to privacy and self-incrimination. The judgment said “the fundamental right to privacy cannot be construed as absolute and must bow down to compelling public interest”.

Article 20 (3) of the Constitution mandated that “no person accused of any offence shall be compelled to be a witness against himself”. CJI reasoned that a voice sample was given for the reason of comparison with other voices in order to see if they matched and were of the same person. A voice sample by itself is not incriminating evidence.

The judgment came in an appeal filed by Ritesh Sinha against a 2010 order of a magistrate court in Uttar Pradesh allowing police to get his voice sample. The police wanted to compare the voice sample with his alleged telephone conversations with his co-accused.

The **87th Report of the Law Commission of India** in 1980 describes a voice print as a “visual recording of voice”. Voiceprints resemble fingerprints, in that each person has a distinctive voice with characteristic features dictated by vocal cavities and articulates.

CJI opined that voice sample along with other impressions like specimen handwriting, or impressions of his fingers, palm or foot collected by police during investigation, by themselves, do not incriminate the accused person, or even tend to do so.

Fundamental rights under article 20:

- Article 20 is one of the pillars of fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India.
- It mainly deals with protection of certain rights in case of conviction for offences.
- When an individual as well as corporations are accused of crimes, the provisions of Article 20 safeguard their rights.
- The striking feature of the Article 20 is that it can't be suspended during an emergency period.
- The Article has set certain limitations on the legislative powers of the Union and State legislatures.

Ex Post Facto Legislation

- The clause (1) of Article 20 protects individuals against ex post facto legislation, which means no individual can be convicted for actions that were committed before the enactment of the law.
- When a legislature declares an act to be an offence or provides a penalty for an offence, it can't make the law retroactive so as to prejudicially affect the individuals who have committed such acts prior to the enactment of that law.

Immunity from Double Punishment

- Clause (2) of Article 20, safeguards an individual from facing multiple punishments or successive criminal proceedings for the same crime.
- According to this clause, no person shall be prosecuted and punished for the same offence more than once.
- Although Article 20 disapproves of the doctrine of 'Double Jeopardy', it does not give immunity from proceedings before a court of law or tribunal.

- Hence, a public servant who has been punished for an offence in a court of law may yet be subjected to departmental proceedings for the same offence.
- It is to be noted that Article 20 provides protection against double punishment only when the accused has been 'prosecuted' and 'punished' once.
- Also, the Article does not prevent subsequent trial and conviction for another offence even if the two offences have some common aspects.

Immunity from Self-Incrimination

- Article 20(3) of the constitution states that the accused can never be compelled to be a witness against himself. In short, no individual can be forced to accuse himself.
- The scope of this immunity has been widened by the Supreme Court by interpreting the word 'witness' as inclusive of both oral and documentary evidence.
- Hence, no person can be compelled to furnish any kind of evidence, which is reasonably likely to support a prosecution against him.
- The right against forced self-incrimination, widely known as the **Right to Silence** is enshrined in the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Constitution.
- Section 161 (2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure states that every person is bound to answer truthfully all questions put to him by [a police] officer, other than questions the answers to which would have a tendency to expose that person to a criminal charge, penalty or forfeiture.
- But where the accused makes a confession without any inducement, threat or promise Article 20(3) does not apply.
- This 'Right to Silence' is not called upon in case any object or document is searched and seized from the possession of the accused.
- Hence the clause does not bar the medical examination of the accused or the obtaining of thumb-impression or specimen signature from him.
- This immunity is only limited to criminal proceedings.
- The privilege against self-incrimination thus enables the maintenance of human privacy in the enforcement of criminal justice.

- If the confession from the accused is derived from any physical or moral compulsion (be it under hypnotic state of mind) it should stand to be rejected by the court.

Right to privacy and Puttaswamy case:

The case was brought by 91-year old retired High Court Judge Puttaswamy against the Union of India (the Government of India) before a nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court to determine whether the right to privacy was guaranteed as an independent fundamental right following conflicting decisions from other Supreme Court benches.

The nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court unanimously recognized in 2017 that the Constitution guaranteed the right to privacy as an intrinsic part of the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21.

The right to privacy was reinforced by the concurring opinions of the judges in this case which recognized that this right includes autonomy over personal decisions (e.g. consumption of beef), bodily integrity (e.g. reproductive rights) as well as the protection of personal information (e.g. privacy of health records).

It explicitly overrules previous judgements of the Supreme Court in Kharak Singh vs State of UP and M.P Sharma vs Union of India, which had held that there is no fundamental right to privacy under the Indian Constitution.

The judgment was interpreted as paving the way for the eventual decriminalisation of homosexuality in India in Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India (2018) and abolishing the provisions pertaining to crime of Adultery under the Indian Legal System in the case of Joseph Shine v. Union of India (27th September, 2018).

Mould your thoughts:

1. Explain the significance of Article 20 of Indian constitution. How the right against self-incrimination enables the maintenance of right to privacy?

National Medical Commission (NMC) bill

Manifest pedagogy: Health as a topic under Governance needs to be studied from two dimension

1. Health as science
2. Health as governance

The topic is related health governance ,its problems and solutions.

In news: President Ram Nath Kovind recently gave assent to a key legislation aimed at replacing the nearly 63-year-old Indian Medical Council Act.

Current dimensions: NMC bill, 2019 provisions

Problems in the sector which the bill aims to solve

Criticisms against the bill

Content: Recently Rajya Sabha cleared the National Medical Commission (NMC) Bill by including a crucial amendment brought in by the government to increase representation of States in the new body, as demanded by the Opposition. The Bill was passed by a voice vote. The Lok Sabha had earlier cleared the proposed law on July 29, 2019. The NMC will replace the Medical Council of India (MCI).

What is NMC Bill 2019?

- The NMC Bill proposes to repeal the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 and replace the Medical Council of India (MCI).
- The president had dissolved the MCI in 2018 following corruption charges against its president Ketan Desai by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).
- A board of governors was appointed to perform its functions.
- As per the Bill, a National Medical Commission will be set up in place of MCI that will have responsibilities such as:
 1. approving and assessing medical colleges,
 2. conducting common MBBS entrance and exit examinations
 3. regulating medical course fees.
- The NMC will be an overarching body, which will frame policies and coordinate the activities of four autonomous boards. These boards will look after the work of under-graduate and postgraduate education, Medical Assessment and Rating and Ethics and Medical Registration.

Provisions of the bill:

Community Health Provider

According to the Bill, the Commission may grant limited licence to practice medicine at mid-level as

Community Health Provider to such person connected with modern scientific medical profession who qualifies such criteria as may be specified by the regulations (provided that the limited license to be granted under this subsection shall not exceed more than one-third of the total number of licensed medical practitioners registered under sub-section (1) of section 31).

The earlier proposal of a bridge course clearing by which alternative medicine doctors could practise modern medicine was removed when doctors had opposed. The government made changes in the bill for the provision *to help tackle the disease burden in rural areas*. According to the Bill, the Community Health Provider may prescribe specified medicine independently, only in primary and preventive healthcare, but in cases other than primary and preventive healthcare, he may prescribe medicine only under the supervision of medical practitioners registered under sub-section (1) of section 32.

National Exit Test (NEXT)

Section 15 (1) of the bill proposes a common final-year MBBS exam, the **National Exit Test (NEXT)**, before an individual starts practising medicine and for seeking admission to postgraduate medical courses and for enrolment in the State Register or the National Register. It will also be a screening test for foreign medical graduates. It will be applicable to all institutes including those of national importance like AIIMS.

Medical Advisory Council

Under the Bill, the central government will constitute a Medical Advisory Council. The Council will be the primary platform through which the states/union territories can put forth their views and concerns before the NMC. Further, the Council will advise the

NMC on measures to determine and maintain minimum standards of medical education.

Private colleges Fee regulation

NMC would frame guidelines for determination of fees and all other charges for 50% of the seats in private medical colleges and deemed universities which are governed under the provisions of this Act because there should be capping on the fee charged by the unaided medical institutions.

Membership of NMC:

As per the Bill, of 25 members proposed for the NMC, only five would be elected which means the non-elected members would be either government officials or those nominated by the government.

States representation in Commission:

There will be 10 vice-chancellors of state health universities and nine elected members of state medical councils in the NMC.

NEET to stay

NEET, a national entrance test along with common counselling for MBBS is provided, which is already an institutionalised mechanism for the successful conduct of tests in 13 languages. Its syllabus is decided by considering the curricula of State Boards and it will be improved continuously.

The NMC, after the law is implemented, will be constituted in nine months and in the next three years, it will set up the mechanism for conducting NEXT for all MBBS students. Based on the results, the students will get their degrees and licence to practise (after an internship). Performance in the theory paper will decide eligibility for admission to postgraduate courses.

Problems in the sector which the bill addresses:

The Bill aims to provide for a medical education system that improves access to quality and affordable medical education, ensures the availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals in all parts of the country.

→ A provision has been made to register community health providers (CHPs) who will be modern medicine professionals and not those dealing with any alternative system of medicine. Also, they will

have limited powers for providing primary and preventive healthcare at the mid-level. The eminent doctors in NMC will decide their qualifications through regulations which will be finalized after extensive public consultation and debate.

- There was no provision to regulate fees in the Indian Medical Council Act 1956. In view of the lack of a regulatory mechanism, the Supreme Court had to pass orders for setting up of fees committees in each state to be chaired by retired high court judges. Hence the Act provides for regulation of fees and all other charges in 50 percent seats in private colleges as well as deemed-to-be universities. This means that almost 75 percent of total seats in the country would be available at reasonable fees.
- The act will ensure probity, quality education and bring down the costs of medical education. It simplifies procedures and provides wider access to people for quality healthcare.
- The NEXT results will eliminate the need for students to approach multiple colleges and take part in multiple counselling processes for admission. This will save students and their families unnecessary physical and financial trauma.
- The Act does not impose any restriction on the number of attempts at NEXT for improving the rank for admission to postgraduate courses.
- 19 out of 33 members, which is more than half of the total strength, would be from states and only a minority of members will be appointed by the Central government thereby ensuring NMC is representative, inclusive and respecting the federal structure of Indian polity.
- The NMC will have eminent medical personalities as members who will be appointed for only one term of four years and will not be eligible for any further extension. They will have to declare their assets at the time of being appointed and again while demitting office.
- The members will also have to declare their professional and commercial engagement or involvement which will be published on the website of the Commission. This ensures transparency of the highest posts.

→ It has been further provided that chairperson/member on ceasing to hold office will not accept for a period of two years any employment in any capacity in a private medical institute whose matter has been dealt with them either directly or indirectly.

Criticisms against the bill:

- The new section 32 has been added where community health providers like compounders, lab technicians, blood sample collectors, etc. could get license to practice medicine without the supervision of a qualified doctor. This means persons without medical background are becoming eligible to practise modern medicine and prescribe independently. This is like creating 3.5 lakh, legally, registered quacks in India.
- Medical student fraternity has completely rejected NEXT in its present format and is against scrapping the NEET-PG. According to them, merit should be the determining factor in securing a PG seat and the current NEET-PG should not be scrapped.

- The system of allopathic health care by qualified MBBS graduates should be governed only by qualified MBBS graduates. But as per the bill, only 20 percent of the members would be elected which means the non-elected members would be either government officials or those nominated by the government.
- The decreasing percentage of seats under controlled fees structure in private medical colleges and deemed universities from 85% to 50% is opposed.
- The **section 45** of the bill, which empowers the Union government to override any suggestion of the NMC is criticised.

Mould your thoughts:

1. What are the provisions of National Medical Commission(NMC) bill which was recently passed? How would it bring reforms in the medical education sector?

Article 370 removal

Manifest pedagogy: Article 370 has been in news for the most obvious reasons. It will be very tricky to write an answer on this in Mains and at the same time remain apolitical. It is advisable that students remain neutral by sticking to the constitutional and legal aspects of the recent Presidential notification rather than going into the politics of it!

In news: Article 370 has been repealed.

Placing it in syllabus: Constitutional provisions

Dimensions: Notification and reorganization bill and how article 370 was removed

Legal and constitutional loopholes

Positive and negative impacts

Content:

Notification and Reorganisation Bill:

Recently Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Amit Shah, introduced the following bill and resolutions regarding Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) in Lok Sabha.

These are:

- Constitution (Application to Jammu & Kashmir) Order, 2019 {Ref. Article 370(1) of the Constitution of India} – issued by President of India to supersede the 1954 order related to Article 370.
- Resolution for repeal of Article 370 of the Constitution of India {Ref. Article 370 (3)}
- Jammu & Kashmir (Reorganisation) Bill, 2019 {Ref. Article 3 of the Constitution of India}

Article 370(3) provides President of India has the powers to amend or repeal the article by issuing a notification, based on a recommendation of Constituent Assembly of J&K. Since President's rule is in force in the state, implementation of article 370 ceased to exist when President of India issued a notification in this regard, after both parliamentary houses passed the resolution.

The Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha passed the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Bill which bifurcates the state into **two Union territories**. As the President signed the Bill and the government issued a notification, Jammu and Kashmir ceased to exist as a state.



- The two Union territories are Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.
- Jammu and Kashmir will have a legislature like Delhi and Puducherry, where key subjects like law and order are with the Centre.
- Ladakh will have no legislature like Chandigarh.
- The Governor of Jammu and Kashmir will now become a Lieutenant Governor.
- **Article 35A**, which made a distinction between the permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir and the outsiders, also ceased to have any effect in Jammu and Kashmir.

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NO ARTICLE 370 WHAT CHANGES IN J&K?



BEFORE	NOW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special powers exercised by J&K 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No special powers now
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dual citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Single citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Separate flag for Jammu & Kashmir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tricolour will be the only flag
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Article 360 (Financial Emergency) not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Article 360 will be applicable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No reservation for minorities such as Hindus and Sikhs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minorities will be eligible for 16% reservation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indian citizens from other states cannot buy land or property in J&K 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People from other states will now be able to purchase land or property in J&K
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RTI not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RTI will be applicable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Duration of Legislative Assembly for 6 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assembly duration in Union Territory of J&K will be for 5 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If a woman from J&K marries out of state, she would lose the citizenship of the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If a woman marries out of state or country, she will still retain all her rights and Indian citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Panchayats did not have any rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Panchayats will have the same rights as in other states
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Right to Education (RTE) was not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children in the state will benefit from RTE



The government is likely to set up a commission for delimitation of constituencies.

Legal and constitutional loopholes:

Article 370(1)(c) explicitly lists the two constitutional articles that will apply to Jammu and Kashmir: **Article 1** (which enumerates India's constituent divisions) and **Article 370** itself. **Article 370(1)(d)** explains how other constitutional provisions may discretionarily be applied to the state - as modified by the president of India through an order, along with the "concurrence" of the "Government of the State."

According to clause 3 of Article 370, for the article could "cease to be operative" or be operative only in part: the president would have to issue a "public notification," but the "recommendation" of the

"Constituent Assembly of the State" would be "necessary before the President issues such a notification."

However, the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir dissolved in 1957, after the state's constitution was adopted and came into force. In 2017, the Supreme Court, in the case **State Bank of India v Santosh Gupta**, observed that even though Article 370 was labeled a "temporary provision" and the Constituent Assembly had dissolved, the article "continue[s] to be in force", thus indicating it had attained permanent status.

On Aug.5,2019 , the president of India, issued **Presidential Order C.O. 272**. Since 370(1)(d) grants the president the authority to apply other constitutional provisions "as modified" to Jammu and Kashmir (provided the president acts in "concurrence" with the state government), C.O. 272 used this authority to amend a separate constitutional provision, Article 367, not through the regular constitutional amendment procedure but to apply to Jammu and Kashmir.

Article 367 provides guidelines on interpreting the Constitution and earlier contained three clauses. C.O. 272 added a fourth clause to this article. According to C.O. 272, **Article 367(4)(c)** shall state that "*references to the Government of [Jammu and Kashmir] shall be construed as including references to the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir*" of relevance in following 370(1)(d)'s requirement of the president obtaining the "concurrence" of the government of the state.

Additionally, Article 367(4)(d) shall state that the expression "'Constituent Assembly of the State' shall read 'Legislative Assembly of the State'" of relevance in following Article 370(3)'s requirement of state-level "recommendation" to the president for ceasing the operation of all or part of Article 370.

As the concurrence of the "Constituent Assembly" of Jammu and Kashmir was no longer needed to amend Article 370 and the "Legislative Assembly" of the state would suffice under C.O. 272, and moreover because the state's legislature was dissolved and the state was under President's rule, the governor's concurrence was sufficed.

The two serious problems with basing C.O. 272 upon the consent of the Governor are:

- Governor is a representative of the Central Government. In effect, therefore, Presidential Order 272 amounts to the Central Government taking its own consent to amend the Constitution.
- As President's Rule is temporary and is meant to be a stand-in until the elected government is restored, decisions of a permanent character such as changing the entire status of a state taken without the elected legislative assembly, but by the Governor, are problematic.

Positive and negative impacts of Article 370 removal:

It has been blamed that Article 370 led to the separatist movement in the state. Government has opined that terrorism cannot be eliminated in J-K until Article 370 and 35A were in existence. The articles not only hindered development and bred corruption but also responsible for the denial of the right to education and reservation for minorities.

As no outsiders could have bought land, it had prevented the building of adequate healthcare services/industry. The government's decision to revoke Article 370 would ensure stability, market access, and predictable laws in the state, which could help it gaining investment, especially in key sectors like tourism, agriculture, IT, healthcare among others.

The economic growth cannot happen in a closed environment in today's world. Hence open minds and open markets will ensure that the youth of the region will put it on the path of greater progress. The integration also gives a boost to investment, innovation and incomes. With the opening of top educational institutes like IIT, IIM, AIIMs, people of the state would not only get better educational opportunities, they would also get a better workforce environment.

With several road, airport and rail line projects in the pipeline in the state, the ease of doing business in the state would improve. Ending the discrimination against women deprived of property rights after marrying outside the valley is also a welcome step. If the decision helps in resettling the uprooted Kashmiri Pandits back home, it will be a big win.

Negative impacts:

- With J&K a Union territory, the central government must ensure that funds are deployed properly and don't line the pockets of a few families and their cronies.
- It will take time before industry feels that the valley is a safe bet.
- Pakistan will try to up its terrorist game.
- At this stage, it is still unclear if any business house wants to invest in an uncertain and precarious environment.
- When the US withdraws its troops from Afghanistan, some of the Taliban's resources will be available to Pakistan to be re-directed towards Kashmir.
- Given the sentimental attachment that most people in the Valley have with the "special status", the decision to remove it has left a negative impact on the emotional integration of people.

- The decision hasn't gone down well in Kargil, a predominantly Muslim district, where people have come out on the streets to protest. This may exacerbate tensions in a region that has managed to stay peaceful so far despite the conflict in the neighbouring Valley.
- It is also critical that proper provisions and restrictions are put in place for buying of property to protect the fragile ecology of the region.
- The mainstream Kashmiri politicians are being projected as villains whose leadership is that have been the bridge between alienated Kashmiris and mainland India since years.

Mould your thoughts:

1. How was the Article 370 removed? What are the legal and constitutional loopholes present in its removal?

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, ISSUES AND INSTITUTIONS

ICC verdict on Bosco Ntaganda

Manifest pedagogy: Two institutions have been a lot in news this year. one is ICJ and the other ICC. Both being judicial organs have both similarities and differences. Hence a conservative perspective is a possibility in exams.

In news: DR Congo's Bosco Ntaganda is convicted for war crimes by ICC.

Placing it in syllabus: International organisations and their mandate.

Static dimensions: International Criminal court (ICC) its origin and powers
How is it different from International Court of Justice (ICJ)?

Current dimensions: Judgement by ICC on Bosco Ntaganda

Content: Judgement by ICC

- A former Congolese rebel leader Bosco Ntaganda has been found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity.
- Ntaganda, nicknamed "**Terminator**", was convicted by the Judges at the ICC on 18 counts including murder, rape, sexual slavery and using child soldiers.
- He becomes the first person convicted of sexual slavery by the ICC.
- Ntaganda, who will be sentenced at a later hearing, is the fourth person convicted by the ICC since its creation in 2002.

- He has 30 days to appeal against the convictions.
- He has been involved in numerous armed conflicts in both Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- His supporters conducted attacks against people perceived not to belong to the **Hema ethnic group**.

ICC and its powers

- The International Criminal Court (ICC) is an international organisation which investigates and, where warranted, tries individuals charged with the *gravest crimes of concern to the international*

community genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression.

- As a court of last resort, *it seeks to complement, not replace, national Courts.*
- Hence it exercise its jurisdiction only when certain conditions are met, such as when national courts are unwilling or unable to prosecute criminals or when the United Nations Security Council or individual states refer situations to the Court.
- Governed by an international treaty called the **Rome Statute**, the ICC is the world's first permanent international criminal court.
- The Rome Statute took effect in 2002, upon ratification by 60 States and ICC began functioning on 1 July 2002.
- States which become party to the Rome Statute become member states of the ICC. As of March 2019, there are 122 ICC member states. 42 states are non-party, non-signatory states.
- **India is not a signatory** to ICC.
- In addition to founding the Court and defining the crimes of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, the Rome Statute also sets new standards for victims' representation in the Courtroom, and ensures fair trials and the rights of the defence.

The ICC has faced a number of criticisms from states and civil society, including objections about its jurisdiction, accusations of bias, questioning of the fairness of its case-selection and trial procedures, and doubts about its effectiveness. The verdict in this latest case is a breakthrough for the prosecution office which has come under increasing scrutiny.

Difference between ICJ and ICC

The ICJ is the primary judicial branch of the United Nations. The court settles legal disputes submitted to it by states and provides advisory opinions on legal questions submitted to it by duly authorized international branches, agencies, and the UN General Assembly.

→ *Subject Matter*

ICJ Settle the legal dispute i.e. sovereignty, boundary disputes, maritime disputes, trade, natural resource etc.

ICC Trial criminal offenses i.e. genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, crimes of aggression.

→ *Parties*

ICJ Only states either members of United Nations or ICJ or both.

ICC States who is either ratified member of ICC or who accept the jurisdiction of ICC

→ *Jurisdiction*

ICJ Two types of jurisdiction; i) Contentious Jurisdiction ii) Advisory opinion

ICC Criminal prosecution of individuals

→ *Authorized Statute*

ICJ Follows ICJ Statute

ICC Follows Rome Statute

→ *Composition of Court*

ICJ Composed of fifteen judges elected to nine year terms and may be re-elected for up to two further terms.

ICC Composed of eighteen judges elected to nine year terms and not re-elected for further terms.

→ *Independence*

ICJ United Nations Judiciary organ

ICC Independent organisation

→ *Adhoc Judge*

ICJ The state party can send adhoc judge

ICC No such provision is instituted by ICC

→ *Appeal*

ICJ No appeal provision

ICC Appeal is instituted by appeal chamber.

Mould your thoughts:

What is the recent ruling by International Criminal Court (ICC) on Bosco Ntaganda is all about? How is ICC different from International Court of Justice (ICJ)?

Intermediate-Range Nuclear force (INF) treaty

Manifest pedagogy: This is a topic which has cross cutting linkages with two subjects - World History and International Relations. It should be studied as part of the Cold war and nuke race and also link it with present nuke race and denuclearization efforts. INF treaty in itself could be a prelims question.

In news: The US has formally withdrawn from INF treaty.

Static dimensions: What is INF treaty

Current dimensions: Reasons for US withdrawal

Impact on global politics

Content: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has announced the US withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

What is the INF Treaty?

- The INF Treaty was signed in December 1987 by President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.
- It prohibited the United States and the Soviet Union from possessing, testing and deploying ground-launched cruise and ballistic missiles with ranges between 300 and 3,400 miles (488km and 5,472km).
- Under the treaty, Washington and Moscow destroyed 846 and 1,846 missiles, respectively.
- Short flight times and unpredictable flight patterns made these missiles hard to detect, so strategists argued that these systems exacerbated crisis instability and increased the chances of accidental nuclear war.
- Given their relatively limited range, these systems were designed chiefly to fight a theatre nuclear war in Europe.
- European countries, therefore, considered the destruction of these missiles highly beneficial to regional security.
- INF Treaty covered all types of ground-launched cruise and ballistic missiles — whether their payload is conventional or nuclear.
- Moscow and Washington are prohibited from deploying these missiles anywhere in the world, not just in Europe.
- However, the treaty only applies to ground-launched systems. Both sides are free to deploy air- and sea-launched missiles within the 300- to 3,400-mile range.

Reasons for US withdrawal:

President Barack Obama's administration first voiced concerns about Russian violations in 2013, and a year

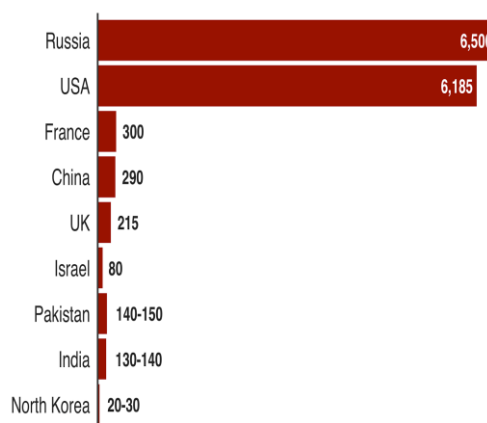
later, Obama sent Russian President Vladimir Putin a letter urging discussions. Both the Obama and Trump administrations communicated with Russia more than thirty times over the issue, but to no avail.

The US officials have identified the 9M729 cruise missile as their main concern. Earlier this year, President Donald J. Trump said the United States would terminate the treaty because of Russian noncompliance. U.S. officials claimed that Russia breached the treaty by deploying systems for an intermediate-range missiles known as the SSC-8.

Trump also raised concerns about China's missiles, which are not constrained by the agreement even though an estimated 95 percent are in the INF range. But the majority of these Chinese missiles are fitted with conventional, not nuclear, warheads, and the United States and Russia possess more than 90 percent of global nuclear stockpiles, far exceeding China's capabilities.

Estimated global nuclear warhead arsenals

Includes warheads in stockpile as well as retired, but still intact



Source: Federation of American Scientists, July 2019

BBC

Moscow denied the treaty violation, demanded to see the evidence and responded with its own list of alleged US infractions, as well as the exhibition of a launch tube that it claimed was that of the 9M729 of US. Putin said

his country would suspend its INF obligations as well. Russian officials charged that the United States had also violated the treaty, though Washington and its allies called those charges spurious.

Some observers have argued that the INF Treaty is “Eurocentric,” failing to take into account the US-Chinese military balance — which is becoming increasingly central to Washington’s strategic calculations.

Impact on global politics:

The INF withdrawal issue has been controversial with US allies, further straining the Nato alliance at a difficult time for transatlantic relations. Nato had favoured a policy designed to push Moscow back into compliance. It is unlikely that Nato allies will agree to host US intermediate-range systems on their territory, a move some fear would lead to a new arms race in Europe.

The abandonment of the pact leaves Europe exposed to Russian land-based missiles capable of hitting their targets within minutes. Russia’s new missiles are land-based, mobile, difficult to identify, rapidly employable and armed with conventional or nuclear warheads, and can strike almost any target in most European countries with little to no warning time. According to the experts, with the loss of the treaty, “Europe loses a central pillar of its security”.

Withdrawal will probably not lead to a new INF deal binding the United States, Russia and China. China has rejected the US offer of trilateral arms control talks. Moscow and Washington engaged in strategic stability discussions this year, but as yet nothing substantive has emerged.

The collapse of the INF Treaty leaves **New START**, (is a nuclear arms reduction treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation. It entered into force on 5 February 2011 and is expected to last at least until 2021).

Governing strategic weapons, as the only US-Russia nuclear arms control deal still standing. But the USA's

recent comments criticising New START as “flawed from the beginning” suggest that the Trump administration is unlikely to extend it past its expiration date of 2021. In the absence of new accords, the five-decade-old US-Russian nuclear arms control regime will meet its demise.

Implications for Asia

China, India, North Korea, and Pakistan - these four nuclear weapons states in Asia also have missiles in this class. The U.S. decision to abrogate the INF Treaty is a signal to the leadership of all four nations that arms control and disarmament is no longer an important global norm. If Russia and the United States continue to undermine that norm, all four of these nations may feel less constrained in the development of their nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

Without the INF’s constraints, the U.S. may begin to pressure Japan, Taiwan, and other Asian allies to deploy U.S. ground-based intermediate-range missiles on their territory. Those missiles need not be armed with nuclear weapons. Most of China’s missiles in this class are armed with conventional high explosives. The United States will try to persuade its Asian allies by arguing new missiles are needed to counter China’s. Increased numbers of conventionally-armed missiles kept on high alert will create new uncertainties that increase the risk of rapid escalation in a future military conflict.

Lessons learnt during the Cold War will need to be learned all over again. There is still strong support among the non-nuclear weapons states to uphold the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to pressure the nuclear weapons states to honor their NPT obligation to return to the negotiating table. The passage of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is an important step forward.

Mould your thoughts:

1. Analyse the implications of withdrawal of US from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force (INF) treaty.
2. What is Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force (INF) treaty? Why did US recently withdrew from it?

INDIAN ECONOMY

SEBI Surplus Transfer

Manifest pedagogy: UPSC will have an eye on performance of government, fiscal deficit, budgeting targets, autonomous institutions and their independent functioning. One key issue here is the role of surplus from financial institutions such as the RBI and SEBI.

In news: SEBI has opposed centre's proposal to transfer surplus money to CFI.

Placing it in syllabus: Financial Sector Reforms: LPG

Static dimensions: Security and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
Fiscal deficit concerns and dividends from government institutions

Current dimensions: Surplus with SEBI and transfer issues
Role of SEBI in market development
Fintech sandbox in India
Fintech 2.0

Content: Surplus with SEBI and transfer issues:

The government's proposal to transfer surplus money with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI) has met with a strong opposition from the regulatory body as it feels that the proposal would result in compromising its "autonomy and its ability to function effectively" towards the progress and development of the Indian securities market.

According to the recently proposed amendment to the SEBI Act, SEBI would constitute a reserve fund and 25% of the annual surplus of the general fund would be put in the reserve fund. Further, the size of such reserve fund cannot exceed the total annual expenditure of the preceding two financial years.

More importantly, the surplus of the general fund, after factoring in all the SEBI expenses and the transfer to the reserve fund, needs to be transferred to the CFI as per amendments proposed in the Finance Bill, 2019.

SEBI has called the proposal "regressive" especially since the SEBI did not have any mandate to raise revenue for the government. This decision has been opposed by the SEBI which has submitted in writing a letter to the Finance Ministry enumerating its objections.

As the autonomy of a regulatory institution like SEBI is critical, the proposal would result in compromising SEBI's autonomy and its ability to function effectively

towards its stated objectives, and thus, hamper the progress of Indian securities markets.

The proposal will also impinge on the financial autonomy of the SEBI as it will have to seek government approval for capital expenditure, which can range from setting up IT infrastructure, expanding the organisational capacity, or any other physical and soft infrastructure that SEBI may require in the light of continuously evolving global securities markets to increase its employee strength."

All the penalties levied by the SEBI and settlement amounts already gets credited to the CFI. The general fund of the SEBI, which currently has a balance of over ₹3,000 crore, is used to meet the expenses of the regulatory body, including salaries and allowances. The fund gets money via charges that the SEBI levies on market participants in the form of registration or processing fees.

However, the Finance Ministry has refused pleas from the capital markets regulator to amend the provision that mandates that about 75% of its surplus be transferred to the Centre's coffers.

SEBI:

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is the regulator for the securities market in India.
- Established in 1988 and given statutory powers through the SEBI Act, 1992.

- The Preamble of SEBI describes its basic functions as "to protect the interests of investors in securities and to promote the development of, and to regulate the securities market and for matters connected there with or incidental there to".
- SEBI has to be responsive to the needs of three groups, which constitute the market:
 - issuers of securities
 - investors
 - market intermediaries
- SEBI has three functions rolled into one body: quasi-legislative, quasi-judicial and quasi-executive.
- It drafts regulations in its legislative capacity, it conducts investigation and enforcement action in its executive function and it passes rulings and orders in its judicial capacity.
- Appeals against SEBI are submitted Securities Appellate Tribunal and second appeal lies directly to the Supreme Court.

It has the following powers:

- to approve by-laws of Securities exchanges.
- to require the Securities exchange to amend their by-laws.
- inspect the books of accounts and call for periodical returns from recognized Securities exchanges.
- inspect the books of accounts of financial intermediaries.
- compel certain companies to list their shares in one or more Securities exchanges.
- registration of Brokers and sub-brokers.

Fiscal deficit concerns and dividends from RBI:

The finance ministry has recently sought from the RBI Rs 27,380 crore that was withheld by the central bank towards risks and reserves in the previous years. The RBI, which follows July-June financial year, has already transferred Rs 40,000 crore in the current fiscal.

If the central board of the RBI approves transfer of Rs 28,000 crore requested by the government as interim dividend for the current fiscal, the total surplus transfer by the central bank would be Rs 68,000 crore in 2018-19.

According to sources, the government expects Rs 69,000 crore dividend in the next financial year. The

government has projected to mobilise Rs 82,911.56 crore as dividend or surplus from the RBI, nationalised banks and financial institutions during 2019-20.

As per the RBI Act, after making provision for bad and doubtful debts, depreciation in assets, contribution to staff and superannuation fund and for all matters for which provision is made under the Act, the balance of the profits shall be paid to the central government.

The receipt from various sources, including RBI dividend, helps government meet fiscal deficit target. *In the Interim Budget 2019-20, the government has projected a fiscal deficit target of 3.4 per cent for the next financial year 2019-20.*

The government has also come out with a road map to reduce the fiscal deficit, the gap between total expenditure and revenue, to 3 per cent of the GDP by 2020-21, and eliminate primary deficit. *Primary deficit refers to the deficit left after subtracting interest payments from the fiscal deficit.*

In Budget Estimate (BE) 2018-19, the primary deficit was calculated as 0.3 per cent of GDP. Primary deficit in Revised Estimate (RE) 2018-19 is calculated as 0.2 per cent of the GDP. The document has projected nil primary deficit for 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years which is a positive sign as it shows reduced usage of borrowed funds to pay for the existing liabilities.

Role of SEBI in market development:

Functions of SEBI can be broadly divided into three categories,

- Regulatory functions
- Developmental functions
- Protective functions

Regulatory functions include:

- Every mutual fund or investment plan, before being introduced into the market is to be regulated by this body.
- Code of conduct, rules and regulations for brokers, merchant bankers who operate in the stock market are put in place by SEBI.
- Anyone who is associated with stock exchange have to be registered with SEBI and it will regulate their functions.

- SEBI oversees the process when one company takes over another one.
- The audit and inquiries of various stock exchanges.

Developmental functions include:

- If someone is trained to become an intermediate in the investment market in India, then his training will be promoted by SEBI.
- Stockbrokers who are registered can now trade through the internet. If going through the stock exchange then an initial offer made by the public on the primary market is also permissible.

Protective functions include:

- Making sure that no kind of insider trading is allowed.
- If one is caught on the charges of insider trading, then one is liable to be punished and fined by SEBI.
- Stopping a company from doing price rigging (the company in order to gain high profits, inflate their prices through artificial means and thus the consumer or the investor gets cheated of funds) to ensure a fraudulent free market.
- Checking the unfair trade practices.
- Educating investors of fraudulent practices.
- The interest of many debenture holders needs to be protected and that is what SEBI does with a book of strict guidelines.

Fintech sandbox in India:

Financial technology, shortened to fintech, is an emerging industry that uses technology to improve activities in finance. The use of smartphones for mobile banking, investing services and cryptocurrency are examples of technologies aiming to make financial services more accessible to the general public.

A sandbox is an enabling infrastructure or interface, which is made available to an outside innovator or fintech by a bank, so that they can test their product and services. The sandbox not only protects the bank's core banking solution (CBS), which is the backbone of a bank or a financial institution, but also allows a CBS kind of interface for testing a product in a scalable manner. This live testing reduces time to market and also allows room for failure without actually going for a commercial launch.

Today, many large banks are engaging with hundreds of fintechs for servicing their customers better.

Globally, there are regulators that have allowed sandbox interface to innovators by allowing banks and financial institutions to share customer data with them in a secure environment. The RBI recently said that it would be shortly allowing sandbox in India by creating a regulatory and supervisory framework for the banks and institutions.

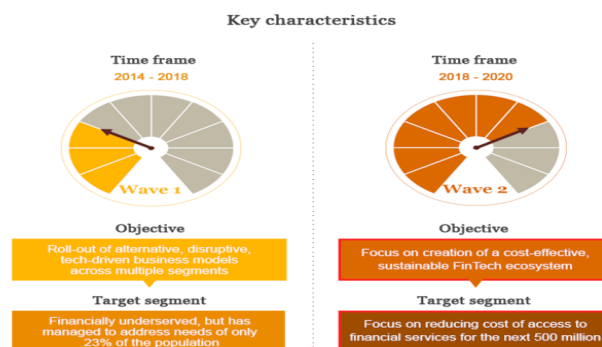
However, the customer's privacy and data protection are some of the key issues when it comes to sandbox. Any customer data leakages not only mean a loss of reputation but can also result in lawsuits for the bank or financial institution. The security is yet another concern as banks are exposing their systems to start-ups or innovators, which are not regulated by any entity.

Fintech 2.0:

The wider objective of FinTech is to serve the unmet financial needs of those segments of the population which are not the core target segments of traditional financial services models. Thus, FinTech aims to contribute to the larger goal of financial inclusion.

Efforts in this direction have manifested in several ways:

- Rise of new age FinTech start-ups rolling out innovative solutions using low-cost technology
- Strategic partnerships between incumbents and FinTechs
- Launch of new digital products or digital-only banks by incumbents
- Government intervention through creation and operationalisation of FinTech policies, launch of initiatives such as smart cities, portals for quick approval of loans for small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs), etc.



By creating a sustainable ecosystem, the ultimate aim of FinTech 2.0 would be to ensure a significant impact of FinTech on the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Hence the focus of FinTech 2.0 should be on the overall financial well-being of the population and not just on particular transactions.

FinTechs can take the support of the existing digital platforms created by aggregators operating in segments such as healthcare, mobility and hospitality, and leverage customer data for offering customised products. To reach segments such as marginal farmers and labourers, FinTechs can leverage data from co-operatives and offer them specific products.

Another key factor in providing financial services is customer support. The target segments would need assistance while availing services. One of the ways to contain costs is driving community-based customer support by forming communities where users answer most of the queries raised by fellow users. Vernacular

language support can further drive adoption of such services and reduce support costs.

CONCLUDING REMARK:

In light of the above issues, the role of SEBI becomes more complex, data driven and calls for multiple research frameworks to safeguard against frauds in the financial system. Thus critics argue that role of SEBI itself requires capacity building, trust creation through better public outreach and regulatory overhaul. Thus, at this juncture the excessive demand has to be thoroughly analysed and even if demand has to be addressed it should be based on independent committee guidelines through scientific principles.

Mould your thoughts:

1. What are the recent issues with SEBI regarding surplus transfer to the government? How the amendments proposed in Finance bill, 2019 affects the autonomy of SEBI?
2. What is the term 'sandbox' related to banking? How is Fintech different from the conventional banking?

Blockchain technology

Manifest pedagogy: UPSC concentrates on the mechanisms and regulation of new and emerging technologies like blockchain, cryptocurrency, Fintech and other Industry 4.0 aspects. These are relevant for both prelims and mains.

In news: Blockchain in Governance

Placing it in syllabus: Economic Reforms

Static dimensions: What is blockchain?

Role of blockchain in Fintech

Current dimensions: Use of blockchain in governance

Block chain and cryptocurrency

Cryptocurrency in India

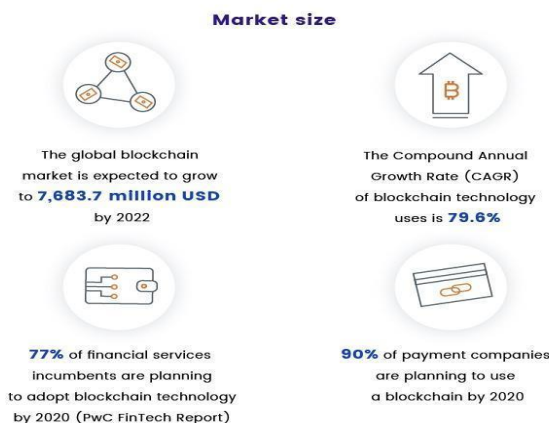
Content: The Banning of Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2019 has proposed stringent penalties, including 10 years of imprisonment, for holding, selling or dealing in cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin. Given the high chances of cryptocurrencies being misused in money laundering, various government bodies such as IT, CBDT, and the customs departments have endorsed this endeavour.

What is blockchain?

- A Blockchain is a public ledger of information collected through a network that sits on top of the internet.
- It is a new way of documenting data on the internet.
- The information is packaged into blocks, which link to form a chain with other blocks of similar information.
- The information recorded on a blockchain can take on any form, whether it be denoting a transfer of money, ownership, a transaction, someone's identity, or an agreement between the two parties.

- Once a consensus is reached between these devices to store something on a blockchain, it cannot be disputed, removed or altered, without the knowledge and permission of those who made that record.
- On a blockchain, once a transaction is sent it is sealed and cannot be reversed.
- Rather than keeping information in one central point, as is done by traditional recording methods, multiple copies of the same data are stored in different locations and on different devices on the network, such as computers or printers.
- This is known as a peer to peer (P2P) network. This means that even if one point of storage is damaged or lost, multiple copies remain safe and secure elsewhere.
- The technology can be used to develop blockchain applications, such as social networks, messengers, games, exchanges, storage platforms, voting systems, prediction markets, online shops etc...

How the blockchain empowers financial services



Distributed ledgers have **3 key attributes**:

Recorded: stored information is time-stamped

Transparent: anyone can see the ledger of transactions.

Decentralized: the ledger exists on multiple computers, often referred to as nodes.

The first recorded mention of blockchain technology came in a document, or whitepaper, published in 2008 by the mysterious founder or founders of Bitcoin, only known as Satoshi Nakamoto.

Role of blockchain in Fintech:

This technology covers the essential needs of the FinTech industry, helping companies to

- track the complete lifecycle of a financial transaction;
- create secure financial products at minimal cost;

- make financial services both functional and technologically sophisticated.

The promising cases of the blockchain in the financial sector are:

1. Blockchain-powered payments are hyper-secure and private. The principle is that each user has personal cryptocurrency keys that they can use to conduct transactions safely. The blockchain ensures that only participants involved in a particular transaction know the details of this transaction. The blockchain spreads changes across the entire network in real time so that participants stay informed constantly. A blockchain records and validates each and every transaction and administers transactions in a way that no one can tamper with or delete them post-execution.
2. It eliminates the need for an intermediary to handle financial services like money transfers. This is a huge relief for businesses that provide peer-to-peer (P2P) transactions as well as for individual payers.
3. The blockchain can efficiently streamline remittances and save costs during cross-border transactions. There are many blockchain FinTech startups offering crypto-based money transfers, including Ripple, OkCoin, BitPesa, Sentbe, and Abra.
4. The trade financing sphere involves lots of tedious paperwork and bureaucracy. The blockchain can exempt traders from burdensome checks of counterparties and optimize the whole lifecycle of a trade. Using a blockchain, companies can enhance trade accuracy, speed up the settlement process, and reduce risks.
5. Blockchain immutability diminishes the possibility of errors and guarantees integrity of records for financial reporting and audits. Since all data is stored in one location, a blockchain can standardize reporting and accounting. Auditors can access all data in real time with read-only nodes on chains.
6. Financial institutions don't have a standardized set of documents that clients must submit to prove their identities. The blockchain offers a digital identity system. Using this system, clients need to go through validation just once and can then use

this verified identity document to conduct transactions all over the world.

Use of blockchain in governance:

Governments today remain the principal authorities in charge of maintaining trusted records. Registers containing citizens and businesses' information are stored in government agencies' centralized databases. Each agency is responsible for maintaining and storing its own respective data.

Hence governments must increase digitalization of public services to increase cost efficiency while ensuring citizens' privacy and strengthening cybersecurity.

- Governments can significantly enhance the protection of critical data using blockchain. E.g Estonia, has implemented a technological platform based on the blockchain to protect the integrity of assets, including national health, judicial, legislative, security, and commercial records. It is ranked number 1 in public services by the EU Commission's DESI Index.
- Storing registries of property and financial assets in a blockchain can impede misappropriation and ease the processing of transactions. As a result complete history of the community's titles is securely documented in a decentralized ledger. In case of a conflict, courts can easily access the ledger to determine the legitimate owner of the title. E.g In 2017, Georgia's National Agency of Public Registry (NAPR) moved its land registry into the blockchain.
- As government agencies currently store data in autonomous centralized databases, they tend not to interoperate in an optimal way. This "results in duplication, overlap and contradiction in the information held." Blockchain eliminates this lack of interoperability which generates unnecessary red tape in obtaining relevant information from a user, and makes the process for sharing data between agencies clear and inexpensive.
- By managing citizens' digital identities which contains a set of personal information that is stored in the blockchain, the government can achieve tremendous efficiency gains, while

bringing the additional benefit of restoring control of identity information to citizens.

- Blockchain can be a powerful tool to combat government corruption. Registering government transactions in the blockchain helps create a trusted history for any transaction and significantly eases the auditing process. This would contribute to making public procurement more transparent.

Blockchain and cryptocurrency:

- A cryptocurrency is a tradable digital asset or digital form of money, built on blockchain technology that only exists online.
- Cryptocurrencies use cryptography to verify and secure transactions.
- Each cryptocurrency work on the basis that it is a large data log of information, namely transactions, that are used to determine how much of a cryptocurrency each address has attributed to it.
- Cryptocurrencies are purely digital, hence there is no option to take out a cryptocurrency in paper or coin form.
- When using cryptocurrencies you have a public key and a private key, both of which appear as strings of random numbers and letters.
- It is very important that you never share your private key with anyone.
- The major difference between cryptocurrencies and traditional financial models is in the decentralized nature of cryptocurrencies.
- This means is that when one spends a cryptocurrency, the approval of the transaction does not come from one central authority, like a bank but rather from a Peer-to-Peer network of computers, coming to a consensus that the transaction is legitimate.
- Most cryptocurrencies also offer the guarantee of privacy as the identity of each individual is concealed behind state of the art cryptography, meaning everyone's privacy remains intact.
- The commonly used cryptocurrencies are Bitcoin, Gridcoin, Litecoin, Ripple, Next, Dash etc

Cryptocurrency in India:

Recently a high-level government panel on virtual cryptocurrencies has recommended a ban on all virtual cryptocurrencies in India. By and large, these include Bitcoin and Ripple which are not under government

control. The committee submitted its report on 23 July 2019, along with a proposed draft bill, *Banning of Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2019*.

In April, 2018 the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had barred banks and financial institutions from dealing with cryptocurrencies. Now if the bill is approved, India will join the countries which have banned cryptocurrencies.

How the ban can affect you



- ▶ Any major activity involving cryptocurrencies may be considered a cognizable and non-bailable offence
- ▶ Fine up to ₹25 crore or three times the loss caused or gains made by anyone who mines, generates, holds, sells, transfers or issues cryptocurrencies
- ▶ Up to 10 years jail for direct or indirect use of cryptocurrencies recommended

There are several implications, both for India and cryptocurrency traders in India.

- The startups, especially, who have been in technological solutions, especially around cryptocurrencies have taken a hit. Even venture capitalists (VCs) and angel investors who have backed crypto startups will be affected.
- A move like this is likely to push cryptocurrencies into a darker place. It would drive transactions underground this resulting in a huge black economy.

- Experts believe that the draft bill, even when implemented, won't be able to stop crypto transactions. As the transactions are completely online, it's impossible to tell where they are happening from.
- As RBI banned banks to deal with individuals or businesses dealing with crypto, many individuals have moved such assets out of India. E.g In October 2018, India's biggest exchange Zebpay moved out to Malta. Since the money is no longer in the regulatory system, the transactions can't be traced.

The government has already clarified that the country has not put any blanket ban on trading in cryptocurrencies yet. The high level committee is favourable towards launching an official digital currency.

At a global level, the industry will keep on growing, innovation will keep on happening, and India might lose out its edge, if after five years it decides to make cryptocurrencies legal. Instead of banning, making virtual cryptocurrencies legal and having strict regulations would be apt.

Mould your thoughts:

1. What do you understand by the term 'Blockchain technology'? How is blockchain helpful in governance?
2. What is a cryptocurrency? What is the status of cryptocurrencies in India?

Fifteenth Finance commission

Manifest pedagogy: Finance commission and NITI Aayog are to be studied along with history of planning, in light of changes in development patterns, disaster management, environmental concerns and also growing regional inequality. Moreover, the cause and effect of policies put forth by the two are important for UPSC Prelims and Mains Examination.

In news: 15th FC panel gets extension to examine defence funding mechanism.

Placing it in syllabus: Fiscal Federalism, Budgeting

Static dimensions: Finance commission (FC)
Terms of reference (ToR) for 15th Finance commission
FRBM Review

Current dimensions: Challenges before 15th FC, Defence Funding Mechanism & Regional Considerations

Content: The Union Cabinet has approved expanding the terms of reference of the Fifteenth FC to address the funding requirements for defence and internal security as also extending its term to November 30, 2019. The Fifteenth FC was constituted by the President of India in November 2017 and was constituted to give recommendations for the five-year period starting April 1, 2020.

Finance Commission:

- The First Finance Commission was established by the President of India in 1951 under **Article 280** of the Indian Constitution.
- Was formed to define the financial relations between the central government of India and the individual state governments.
- The Finance Commission (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1951 additionally defines the terms of qualification, appointment and disqualification, the term, eligibility and powers of the Finance Commission.
- As per the Constitution, the Commission is appointed every five years and consists of a chairman and four other members.
- There have been fifteen commissions to date. The most recent was constituted in 2017 and is chaired by N. K. Singh, a former member of the Planning Commission.

The Chairman of the finance commission is selected from people with experience of public affairs. The other four members are selected from people who:

- Are, or have been, or are qualified, as judges of the high court,
- Have knowledge of government finances or accounts, or
- Have had experience in administration and financial expertise; or
- Have special knowledge of economics

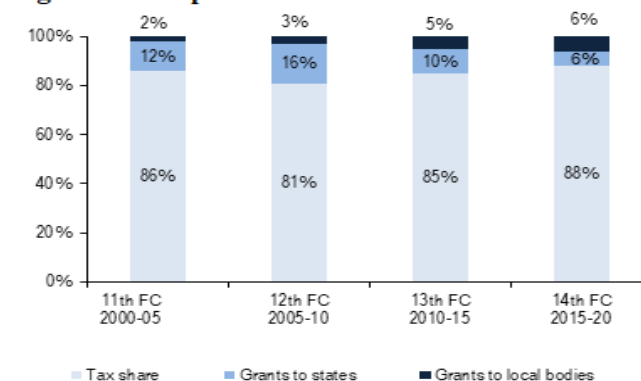
Every member will be in office for the time period as specified in the order of the President, but is eligible for reappointment provided he has, by means of a letter addressed to the president, resigned his office.

Terms of reference (ToR) of 15th FC:

The ToR and the matters that shall be taken into consideration by the Fifteenth FC in making the recommendations are as under:

- i. The distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes and the allocation between the States of the respective shares of such proceeds;
- ii. The principles which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues under Article 275 of the Constitution;
- iii. The measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Panchayats and Municipalities in the State on the basis of the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State.

Figure 1: Composition of central transfers to states



Sources: Reports of the 11th-14th Finance Commissions; PRS.

- The Commission shall review the current status of the finance, deficit, debt levels, cash balances and fiscal discipline efforts of the Union and the States, and recommend a fiscal consolidation roadmap for sound fiscal management, fostering higher inclusive growth in the country, guided by the principles of equity, efficiency and transparency.
- The Commission may also examine whether revenue deficit grants be provided at all.

The terms referred for the consideration of the 15th FC have raised doubts over the cooperative spirit of the centre.

- Considering the use of 2011 census as the basis for resources allocation between states is the most serious issue (presently, 1971 census is being used).
- The proposal unleashes immense socio-political challenges because the census switchover would disadvantage states that performed better in controlling their population over the decades.

- Lower population growth is inherently linked to “lower fertility rates”, which is a consequence of better education, health services and development.
- Hence, it is seemingly apparent that the states that have progressed faster are being penalised for their successes in developmental initiatives.
- Funds for southern states might get stifled as their family planning initiatives have almost stabilised their populations.
- Even West Bengal and North Eastern states have had considerable success in population control and might thereby see their share of allocations reduced.
- In contrast, some northern states continue to see a burgeoning trend in their population with little control, which might enhance fund allocations for them.
- This creates inter-state tensions, which is adding to the already existing cultural tensions between the northern and southern states.

Challenges before 15th FC:

Contending with the slowdown in the Indian economy is a major challenge. There is an upward trend in the fiscal deficits of states due to persistent off-budget spending. The inter-governmental transfer system has become overly complex with different sharing arrangements for different taxes. Spending autonomy of the states, combined with their ability to borrow, has obstructed efforts at consolidating public finances. There is little incentive for states to improve revenue performances.

The higher devolution under the 14th FC have seen marginal increases in social sector allocations. There are pressures to increase allocations to the centrally sponsored schemes (CSS) for higher expenditure on health and education.

On the horizontal balances, the 15th Finance Commission has the responsibility of equalising the widening gap between richer states and low-income states. These inequalities have resulted in widely differing social and capital expenditure between the states. A large part of the equalisation effort by the 15th Finance Commission would have to be through grants-in-aid rather than devolution.

The deteriorating public debt dynamics caused by the requirements of the power sector's restructuring

would be a major area of concern. An alternative fiscal scenario would need to be considered to limit the on-budget fiscal deficits to 3 per cent by including the power sector. Then, a debt-to-GSDP ratio of 25 percent greatly limits the government's borrowing needs and has the potential to curtail social sector expenditure.

Other aspects to be taken into account by 15th FC:

Devolution - 15th Finance Commission has been asked to analyse the impact on the finances of the Union government due to enhanced devolution to states. This is an indication that the enhanced devolution of 42% (from 32%) might be reversed if the Union feels financially constrained.

Reversal will be counterproductive as the 2014 devolution did not lead to any change in the quantum of funds that reached the states. The only change was that the funds that were given away through central flagship schemes was trimmed and the money thus saved was transferred to the state kitty for facilitating unfettered spending as per state discretion.

Curbing Populism - The 15th commission has also been asked to examine ways to curb populist spending due to electoral calculations. Given the growing concerns over rising state deficits (especially in Bihar and Punjab), the concerns over excessive state spending are well taken.

But there is no clear definition of “populist” programmes or on who decides what is populist and thereby the ambiguity is very open.

Pro-Business - Finding ways to encourage “Ease of Doing Business” has also been mandated from the 15th Finance commission. While competition among states for investment is welcome, a race among states to dismantle all regulation is undesirable. Better analysis of constraints to business is needed rather than merely removing regulatory checks that are key to sustain the business ecosystem.

Expansion of the Tax Net - The GST is a cooperative enterprise between the centre and the states. Expansion and deepening of tax base under the GST is the joint responsibility of both the centre and the states. It is possible that in some states, the tax base

may have been extensively trawled. In some states, this may not be the case. States alone cannot be given full credit for good performance nor can they be held accountable for lethargy in widening this tax base.

Under the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act, 2017, state governments are guaranteed a compounded annual growth rate of 14% over 2015–16 (base year). Any shortfall in their collections will be met by compensation grants from the union government to the extent of 100% of the operational loss for the next five years.

The centre recently amended the GST compensation act increasing the cess on some motor vehicles from 15% to 25%. Evidently, the GST Council anticipates demands for compensation from states to exceed original estimates. This 15th FC is being asked to incentivise states for good performance in GST, when the design of the compensation scheme promoted by the central government makes them indifferent to the success of the GST for the next five years.

Income distance criterion: Income distance has been used as a criterion for horizontal devolution over the last seven finance commissions. This parameter provides greater weightage to poorer states depending upon the distance of their per capita GSDP from that of a rich state (Haryana in the case of the 14th FC). Placing high importance on equity, the 14th FC provided a weightage of 50% to the income distance criterion.

If the 2011 population is used for computations, the five states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, and Rajasthan would have an aggregate weightage of 32.48% out of the 50% weight accorded to income distance to all the 29 states. The use of the 1971 population would have moderated the impact of this double whammy on the “non-poor” states.

FRBM Review Panel:

Debt to GDP ratio: The Committee suggested using debt as the primary target for fiscal policy. A debt to GDP ratio of 60% should be targeted with a 40% limit for the centre and 20% limit for the states. It noted that the majority of the countries that have adopted fiscal rules have targeted a debt to GDP ratio of 60%. The targeted debt to GDP ratio should be achieved by 2023. This ratio is expected to be around 70% in 2017.

Further, the government may be allowed to deviate from the specified targets upon the advice of the Fiscal Council in the following circumstances: (i) considerations of national security, war, national calamities and collapse of agriculture affecting output and incomes, (ii) structural reforms in the economy resulting in fiscal implications, or (iii) decline in real output growth of at least 3% below the average of the previous four quarters. These deviations cannot be more than 0.5% of GDP in a year.

Debt trajectory for individual states: The Committee recommended that the 15th Finance Commission should be asked to recommend the debt trajectory for individual states. This should be based on their track record of fiscal prudence and health

Defence fund transfer:

The Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently approved the proposed amendment to enable 15th FC to address serious concerns regarding the allocation of adequate, secure and non-lapsable funds for defence and internal security of India. Under the ToR of the Commission, it is proposed to ensure an assured allocation of resources towards defence and internal security imperatives.

The amendment provides, which the 15th FC shall also examine if a separate mechanism for funding of defence and internal security ought to be set up. However this attempt has been criticised as the Centre might occupy more fiscal space and the move would reduce the kitty that will be available for division between the Centre and states. Now the FC will submit its report to the government on November 30, 2019 rather than October 31.

Mould your thoughts:

1. What new amendments have been made for the Terms of Reference (ToR) of 15th Finance Commission? Analyse the challenges faced by the commission in balancing regional interests.
2. Evaluate the aspects that have to be taken into account by the 15th Finance Commission (FC) before making recommendations. Has higher vertical devolution worked for development in India?

RBI's new guidelines for PSBs

Manifest pedagogy: Banking and Finance is a major factor for the stress in Indian economy today. UPSC might delve into steps, programmes and initiatives with respect to prelims and ask for overall analysis of the impact and significance of stress in the banking sector. Also, one has to focus on interlinking of financial sector to Fintech and Globalisation 4.0 in an era of increasing uncertainties.

In news: RBI has set new guidelines for making top appointments in Public Sector Banks (PSBs).

Placing it in syllabus: Financial Sector Reforms after 1991 - Banking

Static dimensions: "CAMELS" Approach

Mission Indradhanush

Current dimensions: New guidelines for Appointments

Norms under BASEL 1, 2 and 3

Content:

CAMELS

- The acronym "CAMEL" refers to the five components of a bank's condition that are assessed: **Capital adequacy, Asset quality, Management, Earnings, and Liquidity**.
- A sixth component, a bank's **Sensitivity to market risk**, was added in 1997; hence the acronym was changed to CAMELS.
- Ratings are assigned for each component in addition to the overall rating of a bank's financial condition.
- The ratings are assigned on a scale from 1 to 5.
- Banks with ratings of 1 or 2 are considered to present few, supervisory concerns, while banks with ratings of 3, 4, or 5 present moderate to extreme degrees of supervisory concern.

Various studies have been conducted in India as well on various banks using CAMELS framework. Different banks are ranked according to the ratings obtained by them on the six parameters. The results show that there is a statistically significant difference between the CAMELS ratios of all the PSBs in India, thus, signifying that the overall performance of PSBs is different. Also, the banks with least ranking need to improve their performance to come up to the desired standards.

Mission Indradhanush:

- Mission Indradhanush is a 7 pronged plan launched by Government of India to resolve issues faced by Public Sector banks.
- It aims to revamp their functioning to enable them to compete with Private Sector banks.

- Many of the measures taken were suggested by P J Nayak committee on Banking sector reforms as indicated.
- The 7 parts include **appointments, Banks board bureau (BBB), capitalisation, de-stressing, empowerment, framework of accountability and governance reforms (ABCDEFG)**

Appointments – separation of the posts of CEO and MD to check excess concentration of power and smoothen the functioning of banks. Induction of talent from the private sector (recommendation of P J Nayak Committee)

Bank Boards Bureau – will replace the appointments board of PSBs.

- The Banks Board Bureau has its genesis in the recommendations of The Committee to Review Governance of Boards of Banks in India, May 2014.
- The Bureau started functioning from April 01, 2016 as an autonomous recommendatory body.
- The Bureau is engaging with various stakeholders with the objective of helping the banks in the public sector universe to take on the competition, have the ability to appropriately manage and price risk across business cycles, develop resilience to generate internal capital and have the capacity to generate external capital.
- The Bureau is also engaging with the PSBs to help build capacity to attract, retain and nurture both talent and technology.
- It will advise the banks on how to raise funds and how to go ahead with mergers and acquisitions.
- It will also hold bad assets of public sector banks.

- It will separate the functioning of the banks from the government by acting as a middle link.

Capitalisation - Capitalisation of the banks by inducing Rs 70,000 crore into the banks in the next 4 years. Banks are in need of capitalisation due to high NPAs and due to need to meet the new BASEL- III norms.

De-stressing - Solve issues in the infrastructure sector to check the problem of stressed assets in banks.

Empowerment - Greater autonomy for banks; more flexibility for hiring manpower

Framework of accountability - The banks will be assessed on the basis of new key performance indicators. These quantitative parameters such as NPA management, return on capital, growth and diversification of business and financial inclusion as well as qualitative parameters such as human resource initiatives and strategic steps to improve assets quality.

Governance Reforms - Gyan Sangam conferences between government officials and bankers for resolving issues in the banking sector and chalking out future policy.

New guidelines for the appointment of directors for PSBs:

- RBI has tightened the 'fit-and-proper' criteria for directors on the boards of state-run banks, and said the Centre's nominee director shall not be part of the nomination and remuneration committee (NRC).
- The revised criteria for the first time, laid down an exhaustive list for the disqualification of directors.
- The terms with regard to the NRC and the manner of the appointment of directors have been aligned with the practice in private banks, the recommendations made by the Banks Board Bureau, and with the provisions in the Companies Act.
- While the **revised norms are applicable only to public sector banks (PSBs)**, separate guidelines for private banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) may be our soon.
- The NRC will have a minimum of three non-executive directors from amongst the board of directors and of this, not less than one-half shall be independent directors and should include at least

one member from the risk management committee of the board.

- The 'list of entities' in which a prospective director has an interest will be scrutinised to ascertain if such a firm is in default or has been in default in the past decade.
- The negative list says that the candidate should not be a member of the board of any bank, the RBI, financial institution (FI), insurance company or a non-operative financial holding company (NOFHC).
- The candidate should not be connected with hire-purchase, financing, money lending, investment, leasing and other para-banking activities.
- However, investors of such entities would not be disqualified for appointment as directors if they do not enjoy any managerial control in them.
- The elected director can be appointed for three years and could be re-elected but cannot hold office for more than six years.
- The candidate should not be engaging in the business of stock broking.
- The candidate should not be a member of Parliament, state legislature, municipal corporation, municipality, or other local bodies.
- The candidate should not be a partner of a chartered accountant (CA) firm currently engaged as a statutory central auditor of any nationalised bank or State Bank of India.

Basel norms:

Basel I is a set of international banking regulations put forth by the Basel Committee on Bank Supervision (BCBS) that sets out the minimum capital requirements of financial institutions with the goal of minimizing credit risk. The BCBS regulations do not have legal force. Members are responsible for their implementation in their home countries.

Basel I was the BCBS' first accord. It was issued in 1988 and focused mainly on credit risk by creating a bank asset classification system. The bank must maintain capital (Tier 1 and Tier 2) equal to at least 8% of its risk-weighted assets. For example, if a bank has risk-weighted assets of \$100 million, it is required to maintain capital of at least \$8 million.

The Basel I classification system groups a bank's assets into **five risk categories**, classified as percentages:

0%, 10%, 20%, 50%, and 100%. A bank's assets are placed into a category based on the nature of the debtor. Public sector debt can be placed in the 0%, 10%, 20% or 50% category, depending on the debtor.

Basel 2 norms:

Basel II improved on Basel I, first enacted in the 1980s, by offering more complex models for calculating regulatory capital. The **three essential requirements of Basel II** are:

- Mandating that capital allocations by institutional managers are more risk sensitive.
- Separating credit risks from operational risks and quantifying both.
- Reducing the scope or possibility of regulatory arbitrage by attempting to align the real or economic risk precisely with regulatory assessment.

Basel 3 norms:

Basel III is a comprehensive set of reform measures, to strengthen the regulation, supervision and risk management of the banking sector.

Basel 3 measures aim to:

- Improve the banking sector's ability to absorb ups and downs arising from financial and economic instability.
- Improve risk management and governance of banking sector.
- Strengthen banks' transparency and disclosures.

Major changes proposed in Basel 3 over earlier accords:

Better Capital Quality: Better quality capital means the higher loss-absorbing capacity. This in turn will mean that banks will be stronger, allowing them to better withstand periods of stress.

Capital Conservation Buffer: Now banks will be required to hold a capital conservation buffer of 2.5%. The aim is to ensure that banks maintain a cushion of capital that can be used to absorb losses during periods of financial and economic stress.

Countercyclical Buffer: The objective is to increase capital requirements in good times and decrease the same in bad times. The buffer will slow banking activity when it overheats and will encourage lending when times are tough.

Minimum Common Equity and Tier 1 Capital Requirements: The minimum requirement for common equity, has been raised under Basel III from 2% to 4.5% of total risk-weighted assets. The overall Tier 1 capital requirement, consisting of not only common equity but also other qualifying financial instruments, will also increase from the current minimum of 4% to 6%.

Leverage Ratio: A leverage ratio is the relative amount of capital to total assets (not risk-weighted). This aims to put a cap on swelling of leverage in the banking sector on a global basis. 3% leverage ratio of Tier 1 will be tested before a mandatory leverage ratio is introduced in January 2018.

Liquidity Ratio: A new Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) and Net Stable Funding Ratio (NSFR) are to be introduced in 2015 and 2018, respectively.

Mould your thoughts:

1. Analyse the new guidelines issued by RBI for the appointment of directors to Public Sector Banks (PSBs)

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Chandrayaan -2

Manifest pedagogy: ISRO is in full swing in terms of its back to back successful missions. It is not heeding to its failures. With the initial setback it bounced back to meet its self-set deadline. Chandrayaan 2 again is one of its kind missions and it has set many firsts. Hence, Chandrayaan 2 is a very hot topic for both Prelims and Mains.

In news: Recently ISRO successfully raised Chandrayaan-2's orbit for fifth time.

Placing it in syllabus: Indigenisation of Science and technology**Current dimensions:**

- Components of Chandrayaan- 2
- Glimpse of Chandrayaan-1
- Far side of the moon
- South Pole of the moon
- Lunar missions of other countries

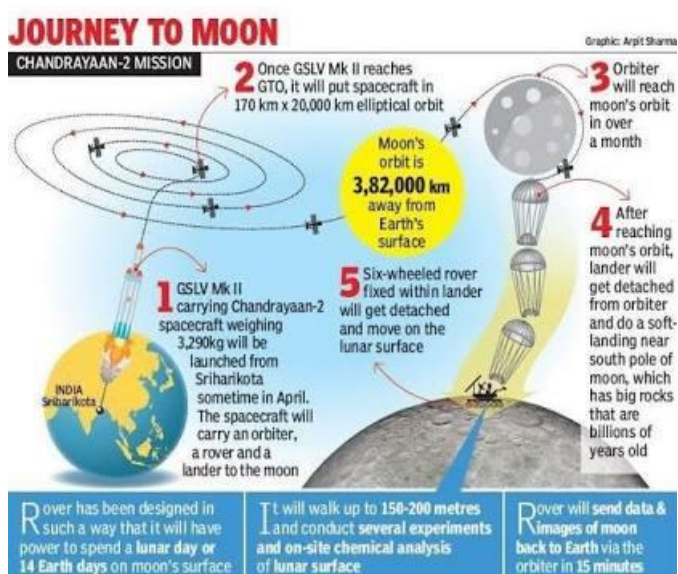
Content: On July 22, 2019, the Chandrayaan-2 was injected into an elliptical orbit of 170x45,475km by India's heavy lift rocket Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-Mark III (GSLV Mk III). The ISRO has said the trans-lunar insertion of Chandrayaan-2, which will send it to the moon, is scheduled on August 14. After that, the Chandrayaan-2 is scheduled to reach the Moon by August 20 and the lander will land on the moon on September 7, 2019.

Components of Chandrayaan-2:

Moon provides the best linkage to Earth's early history. It offers an undisturbed historical record of the inner Solar system environment. Extensive mapping of the lunar surface to study variations in lunar surface composition is essential to trace back the origin and evolution of the Moon.

India has successfully launched the Chandrayaan-2 mission on July 22, 2019.

It consists of a **lunar orbiter, lander named Vikram** and a **lunar rover named Pragyan**, all developed in India. The main scientific objective is to map the location and abundance of lunar water.



Chandrayaan-2 is a follow-up mission from the Chandrayaan-1 mission that assisted in confirming the presence of water/hydroxyl on the moon in 2009. The

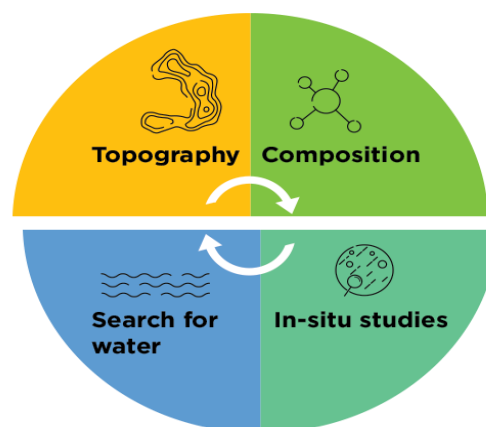
orbiter will perform mapping from an altitude of 100 kilometers (62 miles), while the lander will make a soft landing on the surface in a high plain between two craters, Manzinus C and Simpelius N, at a latitude of about 70° south and send out the rover.

What makes Chandrayaan 2 special?

- 1st space mission to conduct a soft landing on the Moon's south polar region.
- 1st Indian expedition to attempt a soft landing on the lunar surface with home-grown technology.
- 1st Indian mission to explore the lunar terrain with home-grown technology.
- 4th country ever to soft land on the lunar surface.

Science experiments

Chandrayaan-2 has several science payloads to expand the lunar scientific knowledge through detailed study of topography, seismography, mineral identification and distribution, surface chemical composition, thermo-physical characteristics of top soil and composition of the tenuous lunar atmosphere, leading to a new understanding of the origin and evolution of the Moon.



For understanding of the Lunar composition, it is planned to identify the elements and mapping its distribution on the lunar surface both at global and In-situ level.

- In addition, detailed 3-dimensional mapping of the lunar regolith will be done.

- Measurements on the near surface plasma environment and electron density in the Lunar ionosphere will be studied.
- Thermo-physical property of the lunar surface and seismic activities will also be measured.
- Water molecule distribution will be studied using infrared spectroscopy, synthetic aperture radiometry & polarimetry as well as mass spectroscopy techniques.

Key payloads

- Chandrayaan 2 Large Area Soft X-ray Spectrometer - for Elemental composition of the Moon
- Imaging IR Spectrometer- for Mineralogy mapping and water-ice confirmation
- Synthetic Aperture Radar (L & S Band) - for Polar-region mapping and sub-surface water-ice confirmation
- Orbiter High Resolution Camera - for High-resolution topography mapping
- Chandra's Surface Thermo-physical Experiment - for Thermal conductivity and temperature gradient
- Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer and Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy - for In-situ elemental analysis and abundance in the vicinity of landing site.

Glimpse of Chandrayaan- 1:

- Chandrayaan-1 was India's first mission to the moon, which was launched by Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C11 on October 22, 2008, from Sriharikota.
- Chandrayaan-1 made more than 3,400 orbits around the moon.
- It was operational for 312 days till August 29, 2009.
- The lift-off mass of Chandrayaan-1 was 1380 kg, according to ISRO.

Chandrayaan-1 key achievements:

- The Chandrayaan-1 discovered traces of water on the moon-a path-breaking discovery in the world of space science.
- Chandrayaan-1 also discovered water ice in the North polar region of the Moon.
- It also detected Magnesium, Aluminium and Silicon on the lunar surface.

- Global imaging of the moon is another achievement of this mission.

Scientific instruments on-board Chandrayaan-1:

- There were eleven scientific instruments onboard Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft.
- Five of them were Indian and other six were from ESA (3), NASA (2) and Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (1) selected through ISRO Announcement of Opportunity (AO).
- Two of the ESA instruments had Indian collaboration.

Far side of the moon:

- The far side of the Moon is the hemisphere of the Moon that always faces away from Earth.
- The far side's terrain is rugged with a multitude of impact craters and relatively few flat lunar maria compared to the near side.
- It has one of the largest craters in the Solar System, the South Pole–Aitken basin.
- Both sides of the Moon experience two weeks of sunlight followed by two weeks of night; even so, the **far side is sometimes called the "dark side of the Moon"**, where "dark" is used to **mean unseen rather than lacking sunlight**.
- About 18 percent of the far side is occasionally visible from Earth due to libration.
- The remaining 82 percent remained unobserved until 1959, when it was photographed by the Soviet Luna 3 space probe.
- The Apollo 8 astronauts were the first humans to see the far side with the naked eye when they orbited the Moon in 1968.
- All manned and unmanned soft landings had taken place on the near side of the Moon, until 3 January 2019 when the Chang'e 4 spacecraft made the first landing on the far side.
- On 22 July ISRO launched Chandrayaan-2 lander and rover near the lunar south pole on the far side of the moon.

South Pole of the moon:

The lunar south pole is of special interest to scientists because of the occurrence of water ice in permanently shadowed areas around it. The lunar south pole region features craters that are unique in that the near-constant sunlight does not reach their interior.

Such craters are cold traps that contain a fossil record of hydrogen, water ice, and other volatiles dating from the early Solar System. In contrast, the lunar north pole region exhibits a much lower quantity of similarly sheltered craters.

Important Lunar missions by other countries:

By the US-

1. **Surveyor 1** was NASA's first lunar soft-lander in the uncrewed Surveyor program that was launched on May 30, 1966.

2. **Surveyor 3** launched on April 17, 1967 - It was the first Surveyor mission that carried a surface-soil sampling-scoop which was a huge deal.

3. **Apollo 11** was launched from Cape Kennedy on 16th July, 1969 and it was the first space flight that landed humans on the Moon.

4. **Apollo 14** was launched on 31st January 1971 with 3 crew members on board. It was the first to land in the lunar highlands. It was marked as the last of the "H missions", targeted landings with two-day stays on the Moon with two lunar moonwalks.

5. **Apollo 15** was launched on 26th July 1971 which was the first "J mission" with a longer stay on the Moon and a greater focus on science as compared to the earlier landings. It also saw the first use of the Lunar Roving Vehicle.

6. **Apollo 17** was launched on 7th December 1972 which was the final mission of NASA's Apollo program

To date, the United States is the only country to have successfully conducted crewed missions to the Moon, with the last departing the lunar surface in December 1972.

By the Soviet Union-

1. **Luna 9** was an unmanned space mission of the Soviet Union's Luna programme launched on 3rd

February 1966. It became the **first spacecraft to achieve a soft landing on the Moon.**

2. **Luna 13** launched on 21st December 1966 landed in the region of Oceanus Procellarum ("Ocean of Storms") of the Moon.

3. **Luna 16, also known as Lunnik 16**, was the first robotic probe to land on the Moon and return a sample of lunar soil to Earth.

4. **Luna 17, also known as Lunik 17**, was responsible for deploying the first robotic rover onto the surface of the Moon.

5. **Luna 21** launched on 8th January 1973 with objectives of collecting images of the lunar surface, perform laser ranging experiments from Earth, observe solar X-rays and studying mechanical properties of the lunar surface material.

6. **Luna 23** was launched on 28th October 1974 which intended to return lunar samples to Earth.

By China-

1. **Chang'e 3** is an unmanned lunar exploration mission operated by the China National Space Administration (CNSA) that was launched on December 2013.

It incorporated a robotic lander and China's first lunar rover. On 28 December 2015, Chang'e 3 discovered a new type of basaltic rock, rich in ilmenite, a black mineral.

2. **Chang'e 4** is a robotic spacecraft mission that was launched on 7th May 2018 as part of the second phase of the Chinese Lunar Exploration Program.

It achieved the first soft landing on the far side of the Moon, on 3 January 2019.

Mould your thoughts:

1. Explain the significance of Chandrayaan- 2. How is it different from Chandrayaan-1?

ENVIRONMENT & DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Blue flag certification

Manifest pedagogy: Environmental degradation issues are part of mains syllabus. Blue flag certification issue being in the news, could be a probable area of preparation. Marine pollution would be an important dimension of the topic to prepare.

In news: 12 Indian beaches are in the race to crest the Blue flag certification.

Placing it in syllabus: Conservation, environment pollution and degradation

Static dimensions: Pollution of beaches
What is blue flag certification
Criteria for qualifications

Current dimensions: 12 Indian beaches approved for blue flag certification
SCIOM project

Content: The Union Environment Ministry has selected 12 beaches in India to vie for a 'Blue Flag' certification, an international recognition conferred on beaches that meet certain criteria of cleanliness and environmental propriety.



These beaches are at Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Bhogave (Maharashtra), Ghoghla (Diu), Miramar (Goa), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Eden (Puducherry), Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden (Odisha), and Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands).

Pollution of beaches

Beach pollution is a persistent problem all around the world. Studies have shown that beach pollution is usually infrequent and confined to local areas.

Sources of beach pollution include

SOLID WASTES Plastic, rubber, foam materials and metals which take hundreds of years to break down.

SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS A mixture of human generated waste is dumped into the oceans from sewage treatment plants. Sewage sludge is made up of organic waste containing bacteria, viruses, poisonous compounds, synthetic and organic chemicals and an overabundance of nutrients.

STORMWATER RUNOFF Combined sewer systems are designed to carry both raw sewage and storm water runoff to sewage treatment plants. During heavy rainstorms, these systems can become hydraulically overloaded and discharge a mixture of raw sewage and polluted runoff into local waterways and downstream beaches.

POLLUTED RUNOFF FROM FARMS, ROADS and CITIES Much of the pollution comes from illegal dumping of household and industrial chemicals, automobile waste, and agricultural chemical and fertilizer usage.

ACCIDENTAL OIL SPILLS This encompasses oil spills from ocean going tankers, offshore drilling, and illegal dumping.

Problems caused due to beachfront pollution are

- The presence of debris not only affects the aesthetic appeal of beaches negatively but also reduces their recreational (tourism) value drastically.
- The destruction of the habitats of the organisms that call the beachfront home as well as the actual killing off of the organisms with oil spills, solid waste trash (plastics, metals), chemicals etc...
- Many harmful microorganisms (viruses, bacteria, protozoans) are released into the ocean through untreated or partially treated sewage.

The National Centre of Coastal Research (NCCR) released a report on beach pollution in India in 2018 which highlighted that *tourism and fishing are the biggest culprits*, contributing most of the plastic litter on beaches.

Blue flag certification

- The Blue Flag Programme for beaches and marinas is run by the international, **non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE (the Foundation for Environmental Education)**.
- It started in France in 1985 and has been implemented in Europe since 1987 and in areas outside Europe since 2001, when South Africa joined.
- **At present Japan and South Korea are the only countries in South and southeastern Asia to have Blue Flag beaches.**
- Spain tops the list followed by Greece and France.

- The Blue Flag is sought for beaches, marinas, and sustainable boating tourism operators as an indication of their high environmental and quality standards.
- The certification include standards for quality, safety, environmental education and information, the provision of services and general environmental management criteria.
- Certificates, which FEE refers to as awards, are issued on an annual basis to beaches and marinas of FEE member countries.

Criteria for Blue Flag certification of beaches

There are nearly 33 criteria that has to be met to qualify for a Blue Flag certification. Some criteria are voluntary and some compulsory. Some of them are

- Information relating to coastal zone ecosystems and natural, sensitive areas in the coastal zone must be displayed.
- Information about bathing water quality must be displayed.
- Information about the Blue Flag Programme must be displayed.
- Compliance with the requirements and standards for excellent bathing water quality.
- No industrial or sewage related discharges may affect the beach area.
- Compliance of the community with requirements for sewage treatment and effluent quality.
- The beach must comply with all regulations affecting the location and operation of the beach (coastal zone planning and environmental legislation).
- Waste disposal bins/receptacles must be available on/by the beach in adequate numbers, regularly maintained and emptied.
- Adequate and clean sanitary facilities with controlled sewage disposal.
- Regulation concerning dogs and other domestic animals on the beach must be strictly enforced.
- An adequate number of lifeguards and/or lifesaving equipment must be available at the beach.
- A minimum of one Blue Flag beach in each municipality must have access and toilet facilities provided for disabled persons.

Indian beaches and Blue flag certification

About ₹20 crore have been spent on each of the beaches which are in the race to bag Blue flag certification. It will be decided by FEE jury by October, 2019 if these beaches meet the standards. If approved, beaches will be given the qualification for a year and must apply annually to continue meriting the right to fly the flag at their locations.

The Indian beaches are being developed by the **Society for Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM)**, an environment ministry's body working for the management of coastal areas, according to the Blue Flag certification standards.

In December 2017 a pilot blue flag project was launched to develop Indian beaches. The prime objective of the project is to enhance standards of cleanliness, upkeep and basic amenities at beaches. Under the project, each state or union territory has been asked to nominate a beach which will be funded through the ongoing Integrated Coastal Management Programme.

Chandrabhaga beach on the Konark coast of Odisha became the first in Asia to get the Blue Flag certification in 2018.

Society for Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM)

SICOM has been established under the aegis of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate change, Government of India with a vision for vibrant, healthy and resilient Coastal and Marine Environment.

Objective and Functions of SICOM

- To Support implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) activities in India.
- To promote Research & Development (R&D) and stakeholder participation in management of the Coastal areas.
- To support to check violations to Coastal Regulatory Zones (CRZ) through improved technology-enabled enforcement, strengthened institutions, and regulatory and legal reform.

Beach Environment & Aesthetic Management System (BEAMS)

MoEF&CC has conceived an integrated coastal management scheme called **BEAMS** to reduce existing pollutants on beaches and to aspire & achieve such high International Standards in India.

The main objective of setting up of BEAMS programme is to promote sustainable development in coastal regions of India and for the beach management authorities to strive to achieve high international standards in four categories of

- Environmental Management including cleanliness, solid waste management in beaches.
- Environment Education.

- Safety & Security of Beachgoers.
- Bathing Water Quality Standards.

SICOM has initiated the process for clean beaches in 13 pilot beaches (one pilot beach in every Coastal States/UTs) under this programme and inline with Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan.

Mould your thoughts:

1. What is "Blue Flag certification"? What are the measures taken by India to bag blue flag certificate for its beaches?

SNIPPETS FOR PRELIMS

Tribal sub-plan

It is a plan or strategy which was introduced by the government to ensure the **socio-economic development of the Tribal people of India**. It is a part of the annual plan of a state or UT (Union Territory). The funds that are given under Tribal Sub Plan are in proportion with the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in the region.

Aim: The Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) aims to bridge the gap between the Schedule Tribes (STs) and the general population with respect to all socio-economic development indicators in a time-bound manner.

Objectives

- To reduce poverty and unemployment of the Tribal.
- To eradicate the exploitation and develop the remote areas.
- To improve the life there by providing adequate health and educational services.
- To provide physical and financial security against any kind of oppression and exploitation

Key features

- The Tribal Sub Plan was proposed on the basis that no development is possible without the elimination of exploitation in any field.
- There are 30 Central Ministries / Departments, and 23 States and 4 UT, having specific fund allocation obligation for Tribal Sub Plan (TSP).
- State Governments are supposed to earmark TSP funds in proportion to ST population (Census 2011) in the State with respect to total State Plan.
- TSP is not applicable to states where tribals represent more than 60% of the population.

- Central Ministries and Departments are obligated for earmarking of TSP funds as per percentage prescribed by Ministry of Finance.
- Tribal Sub Plan funds are to be non-divertible and non-lapsable.
- **Monitoring of TSP:** Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has been mandated for monitoring of Central TSP as per the framework and mechanism designed by NITI Aayog.

Public accounts committee report on TSP

- The Public Accounts Committee (Chair: Mr. Mallikarjun Kharge) submitted its report on 'Tribal Sub-Plan' on December 18, 2017.
- The Committee looked at the implementation of TSP in three ministries: (i) Human Resource Development; (ii) Health and Family Welfare; and (iii) Ayush.
- The Committee noted several discrepancies in the implementation of the TSP, including: (i) non-adoption of specific norms for release of funds, (ii) weak programme management, (iii) deficient monitoring system, (iv) and non-implementation of information programmes.

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana

Scheme launched in April, 2015 to provide formal access of financial facilities to Non Corporate Small Business Sector. The basic objective of the scheme is to promote & ensure bank finance to unfunded segment of the Indian economy.

Key features of the scheme

- Under the scheme the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises are provided loans upto ₹10

lakh These loans are classified as MUDRA loans under PMMY. for this a new institution Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd. (MUDRA was set up by the government of India.

- The loans under PMMY are given by Commercial Banks, RRBs, Small Finance Banks, MFIs and NBFCs.
- **Types of loans:** Under the aegis of Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY), MUDRA has created three products i.e. 'Shishu', 'Kishore' and 'Tarun' as per the stage of growth and funding needs of the beneficiary micro unit. These schemes cover loan amounts as below:
 1. Shishu: covering loans up to ₹50,000
 2. Kishore: covering loans above ₹50,000 and up to ₹5,00,000
 3. Tarun: covering loans above ₹5,00,000 and up to ₹10,00,000
- **Eligibility:** All Non-Corporate Small Business Segment (NCSBS) comprising of proprietorship or partnership firms running as small manufacturing units, service sector units, shopkeepers, fruits/vegetable vendors, truck operators, food-service units, repair shops, machine operators, small industries, food processors and others in rural and urban areas, are eligible for assistance under Mudra.
- **Purpose of Loan assistance:** As MUDRA loan is a business loan, the loan amount cannot be used for personal needs. It is provided to small businesses that carry out specific activities in the manufacturing, services or trading sectors. Businesses can utilize the capital obtained from a MUDRA loan for marketing purposes, increasing the available working capital or for acquiring capital assets to grow the business.
- Bank branches would facilitate loans under Mudra scheme as per customer requirements. Loans under this scheme are collateral free loans.
- **MUDRA is a refinancing Institution.** MUDRA does not lend directly to the micro entrepreneurs / individuals. Mudra loans under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) can be availed of from nearby branch office of a bank, NBFC, MFIs etc. Borrowers can also now file online application for MUDRA loans on **Udyamimitra portal**

It comprises of both comprising both Central Sector as well as Centrally Sponsored Schemes/Missions.

The schemes that are part of the Umbrella Scheme are;

- **Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH):** It aims to promote holistic growth of the horticulture sector; to enhance horticulture production, improve nutritional security and income support to farm Households.
- **National Food Security Mission (NFSM), including National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP),** aims to **increase production of rice, wheat, pulses, coarse cereals and commercial crops**, through area expansion and productivity enhancement in a suitable manner in the identified districts of the country, restoring soil fertility and productivity at the individual farm level and enhancing farm level economy. It further aims to **augment the availability of vegetable oils and to reduce the import of edible oils.**
- **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA):** NMSA aims at promoting sustainable agriculture practices best **suitable to the specific agro-ecology focusing on integrated farming**, appropriate soil health management and synergizing resource conservation technology.
- **Submission on Agriculture Extension (SMAE):** SMAE aims to **strengthen the ongoing extension mechanism of State Governments, local bodies etc., achieving food and nutritional security** and socio-economic empowerment of farmers, to institutionalize programme planning and implementation mechanism, to forge effective linkages and synergy amongst various stakeholders, to support HRD interventions, to promote pervasive and innovative use of electronic / print media, interpersonal communication and ICT tools, etc.
- **Sub-Mission on Seeds and Planting Material (SMSP):** SMSP aims to **increase production of certified / quality seed**, to upgrade the quality of farm saved seeds, to strengthen the seed multiplication chain, to promote new technologies and methodologies in seed production, processing, testing etc., to strengthen and modernizing infrastructure for seed production, storage, certification and quality etc.
- **Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanisation (SMAM):** SMAM aims to **increase the reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers** and to the regions where availability of farm power is low, **to promote 'Custom Hiring Centres'** to offset the adverse economies of scale arising due to small landholding and high cost of individual ownership, to create hubs for hi-tech and high value farm equipment, to create awareness among stakeholders through

Green Revolution - Krishonnati Yojana

Background

In the year 2018 the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister gave its approval for the Umbrella Scheme, "Green Revolution – Krishonnati Yojana" in agriculture sector beyond 12th Five Year Plan for the period from 2017-18 to 2019-20.

demonstration and capacity building activities, and to ensure performance testing and certification at designated testing centers located all over the country.

- **Sub Mission on Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine (SMPPQ):** SMPPQ aims to **minimize loss to quality and yield of agricultural crops from the ravages of insect pests, diseases, weeds, nematodes, rodents, etc.** and to **shield our agricultural biosecurity** from the incursions and spread of alien species, to facilitate exports of Indian agricultural commodities to global markets, and to promote good agricultural practices, particularly with respect to plant protection strategies and strategies.
- **Integrated Scheme on Agriculture Census, Economics and Statistics (ISACES):** It aims to **undertake the agriculture census, study of the cost of cultivation of principal crops, to undertake research studies on agro-economic problems of the country, to fund conferences/workshops and seminars involving eminent economists, agricultural scientists, experts and to bring out papers to conduct short term studies, to improve agricultural statistics methodology and to create a hierarchical information system on crop condition and crop production from sowing to harvest.**
- **Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Cooperation (ISAC):** It aims to **provide financial assistance for improving the economic conditions of cooperatives, remove regional imbalances** and to speed up - cooperative development in agricultural marketing, processing, storage, **computerization** and weaker section programmes; to help cotton growers fetch remunerative price for their produce through value addition besides ensuring supply of quality yarn at reasonable rates to the decentralized weavers.
- **Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Marketing (ISAM):** ISAM aims to **develop agricultural marketing infrastructure; to promote innovative and latest technologies** and competitive alternatives in agriculture marketing infrastructure; to provide infrastructure facilities for grading, standardization and quality certification of agricultural produce; to establish a nationwide marketing information network; to integrate markets through a common online market platform to **facilitate pan-India trade in agricultural commodities, etc.**
- **National e-Governance Plan (NeGP-A):** It aims to **bring farmer centricity & service orientation to the programmes;** to enhance reach & impact of extension services; to improve access of farmers to information & services throughout crop-cycle; to build upon, **enhance & integrate the existing ICT initiatives of Centre and States;** and to enhance

efficiency & effectiveness of programs through making available timely and relevant information to the farmers for increasing their agriculture productivity.

The Schemes/Missions focus on creating/strengthening of infrastructure of production, reducing production cost and marketing of agriculture and allied produce. All these schemes/missions were appraised and approved independently as separate scheme/mission. In 2017-18, it has been decided to club all these schemes / missions under one umbrella scheme 'Green Revolution - Krishonnati Yojana'

Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana

(Source: PIB)

What is it?

The Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY) Plan Scheme has been designed to **incentivise employers for generation of new employment, where Government of India will be paying the full employer's contribution towards EPF & Employee Pension Scheme (EPS)** both w.e.f 01.04.2018 (earlier benefit was applicable for employer's contribution towards EPS only) for the new employment

Key features of the scheme

- It is implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Employment through the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO).
- The entire system is online and AADHAR based with no human interface in the implementation of the scheme.

Eligibility Criteria for establishments for claiming benefit under the scheme

- Establishment should be registered with EPFO under EPF Act 1952 and have a valid LIN (labour identification number)
- Establishment should have a valid organisational PAN
- Establishment must have a valid Bank Account, the details of which are to be entered and through which payments may be made to the establishment.
- Establishment should have submitted their ECR for the month of March, 2016
- Establishment should have increased the number of employees on or after 01.04.2016
- For new establishments registered after 01.04.2016, all new employees can be covered subject to meeting of necessary conditions.

Necessary conditions for eligibility of employees under PMRPY

- New employee should have joined in the establishment on or after 01.04.2016 and should not have been a regular employee in any EPF registered establishment prior to this.
- Employer should ensure that the new employee has a valid UAN which is Aadhaar linked. In case it is not available, it may be obtained from the EPFO website. The mobile number and other contact details are to be captured by EPFO.
- The EPS contribution for the new employee will be available for 3 years.
- In case an establishment eligible for a Scheme has a drop/fall in employment from the reference base, the establishment will not be eligible for the scheme in the months where employment is below this reference base.

Significance of the scheme

The PMRPY scheme has a dual benefit, where, on the one hand, the employer is incentivised for increasing the employment base of workers in the establishment, and on the other hand, a large number of workers will find jobs in such establishments. A direct benefit is that these workers will have access to social security benefits of the organized sector

National Achievement Survey(NAS)

What is NAS?

National Achievement Survey is a representative sample of schools from all districts in India aimed at understanding the health of the education system in government and government aided schools.

Background

In order to increase focus on quality of elementary education, the Central rules to The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) Act, 2009 have been amended in February 2017 to **include references on class-wise, subject-wise Learning Outcomes**. The Learning Outcomes for each class in Languages (Hindi, English and Urdu), Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Science and Social Science up to the elementary stage (classes 1 to 8) have, accordingly, been finalized and shared with all States and UTs. Learning outcomes have been translated in different languages and serve as a benchmark for student's capabilities to be achieved in each subject & class.

Key features of the NAS-2017

- The present (2017) survey is linked to the learning outcomes.

- NAS at the elementary level was based on the **Learning Outcomes developed by the NCERT**.
- Under the NAS the learning gaps will be identified in all the districts of the country.
- Findings from the NAS will be used for formulating policies, planning and pedagogical interventions to improve student learning.
- It is not designed to assess the individual student performance.
- This NAS was conducted for the Classes 3, 5 and 8 in government and government aided schools.
- The design and implementation of the survey included in its ambit the school leaders, teachers and the whole network of officials at the Cluster, Block, District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and the Directorates of Education in the different States/ UTs.
- The survey tools used multiple test booklets with 45 questions in Classes III and V related to language, mathematics and 60 questions in Class VIII in Mathematics, Language, Sciences and Social Sciences.
- The competency based test questions developed, reflected the Learning Outcomes developed by the NCERT which were recently incorporated in the RTE Act by the Government of India.
- There is no much variation in the scores of children belonging to social categories such as SC, ST, OBC and General.
- There is no much variation in the scores of children from schools having government and private management

History of NAS Sampled Based Survey Cycles Completed											
SURVEY CYCLE	CLASS V	CLASS VIII	CLASS III								
CYCLE I	2001 – 2002	2002 – 2003	2003 – 2004								
CYCLE II	2005 – 2006	2007 – 2008	2007 – 2008								
CYCLE III	2009 – 2011	2010 – 2013	2012 – 2013								
CYCLE IV	2014 – 2015	2015 – 2016	2015 – 2016								
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>SUBJECTS TESTED</td><td>Mathematics, Language, Environmental Studies</td><td>Mathematics, Language, Science, Social Science</td><td>Mathematics, Language</td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">Background Questionnaires – Student, Teacher and School</td></tr> </table>				SUBJECTS TESTED	Mathematics, Language, Environmental Studies	Mathematics, Language, Science, Social Science	Mathematics, Language	Background Questionnaires – Student, Teacher and School			
SUBJECTS TESTED	Mathematics, Language, Environmental Studies	Mathematics, Language, Science, Social Science	Mathematics, Language								
Background Questionnaires – Student, Teacher and School											

Significance

- NAS 2017 has informed us about the learning levels of children at different stages and also about the learning outcomes on which score is very low
- The National Achievement Survey (NAS) is the **largest ever national assessment survey in the country and is amongst the largest in the world**, was conducted throughout the country.

NAS, Class X-2018

Key highlights of the survey

- The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) conducted National Achievement Survey throughout the country in

February 2018 for Class 10 in government, government aided and private schools.

- The survey tools used multiple test booklets in Mathematics, Modern Indian Language, English, Sciences and Social Sciences.
- Along with the test items, questionnaires pertaining to students, teachers and schools were also used.
- The attainment of the learning levels of 1.5 million students across 610 districts in 34 States/UTs were assessed
- In the survey, students of class 10 have performed the worst in mathematics.
- In the average performance, Andhra Pradesh performs the best at 40.94 percent while Sikkim gives the lowest outcome with 27 per cent.
- The performance of Delhi was remarkable in average score in five subjects while J&K gave poor performance in four of the five subjects.

National sports University

The National Sports University, Manipur was set up in 2018. The University is presently functional from its temporary campus at the Khuman Lampak Sports Complex of Imphal.

Vision

National Sports University aims to become the pioneering university in the country to prepare world-class athletes, sports scientists, sports managers, sports architects, sports journalists, physical educationists with the help of path-breaking research & diverse programs that inspire leadership, teamwork, & resilience among its students, thereby profoundly impacting our society in meaningful ways.

Mission

- To produce top athletes, sports scientists, competent physical educationists by offering programs that cultivate learning through competition, recreation, physical activity in addition to classroom learning.
- To mentor students by inculcating values & leadership skills in them by providing diverse opportunities that develop character to succeed in all facets of their lives.
- To study human potential holistically by conducting pioneering research in the field of sports science & use its findings to boost public health & enhance international performance of Indian athletes.
- To develop the entire sports eco-system including sports management, sports journalism, sports architecture, sports equipment manufacturing, etc.
- To contribute towards promoting international peace with the power of sports by helping build a society & country healthy in mind & body.

Motto

Through tireless effort & knowledge, towards excellence.

The University will have four schools

1. School of Sports Science and Sports Medicine
2. School of Sports Management and Technology
3. School of Sports Education
4. School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Other key features of the University

- The National Sports University will have the flexibility to open new schools/departments in consonance with the advances and developments in sports science, sports medicine, and allied areas.
- The University, once developed, will be the first one of its kind to promote sports education in the areas of sports sciences, sports technology, sports management, and sports coaching.
- **Serving the Community:** Providing extension services to the local community with the objectives of improving their health and lifestyle as well as giving impetus to sports of local origin like Sagol Kangjei (polo), Thang Ta (Manipuri martial art), Yubi Lakpi (rugby), Mukna, Kang, etc. shall also be one of the key functions of NSU
- It will also function as the national training centre for selected sports disciplines by adopting the best international practices by signing Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with international universities. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has already signed MoUs with the Universities of Canberra and Victoria in April 2017.

National Entrepreneurship Awards(NEA)

(Source: website of NEA)

Key highlights

- The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** has instituted the **National Entrepreneurship Awards (NEA) in 2016**
- It seeks to recognise and honor outstanding young first generation Entrepreneurs and their Ecosystem Builders for their outstanding contribution in entrepreneurship development.
- The Awards also seek to highlight models of excellence for others to emulate and improve upon.
- **The National Entrepreneurship Awards (NEA) 2019 is the 4th edition in the NEA series.**
- **Common Criteria for all Enterprise Award Categories:**Applicable for Enterprise Award Categories, A1, A2, A3, including General and Special Category Awardees)

1. Entrepreneur's age should be below the age of 40 years as on April 1st, 2019
2. The candidate should be a First-Generation Entrepreneur/s. The definition of a first-generation entrepreneur for the scheme is "An entrepreneur who is not in the same line of business as his/her parent. They should have started the enterprise on their own initiative, idea or innovation".

Types of Awards under NEA

Award categories in Goods

- Textiles, leather and related goods
- Agri, food and forestry products
- Chemicals, pharma, bio and other processed materials
- Engineering systems
- Renewable energy and waste management
- Handicrafts, traditional manufacturing & other goods

Award categories in Services

- IT & ITES, Financial
- Education
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- E-Commerce, logistics, transport & other services

Additionally awards will be presented to the best entrepreneurs in the following categories

- Social Enterprises
- Women Entrepreneur
- Entrepreneur from SC/ST Category
- Entrepreneur from Persons with Disability (PwD) category
- Entrepreneur from Difficult Areas
- Barefoot Enterprises

World Youth Skills Day & Kaushal Yuva Samwaad (A Youth Dialogue)

(Source: PIB and UNO)

With the commemoration of World Youth Skills Day on July 15, 2019 and the 4th Anniversary of the Skill India Mission, the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship has announced the launch of "Kaushal Yuva Samwaad" (A Youth Dialogue).

Aim and Objectives

- Creating an open dialogue with the youth across all skill training centres to hear their views, ideas, opportunities and recommendations which could help the Ministry in scaling the existing programs and improve overall efficiency of its projects.
- It is intended to identify and rectify the gaps so that all skill development programs are aligned to the current demands and help in creating a skilled workforce for the future.

Key highlights

- Kaushal Yuva Samwaad is being organized across all Skill India training centres, namely, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKK), Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), Polytechnics, Institutes under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Shikshan Sansthan, DDU-GKY Centres and other fee-based training centres across the country.
- As per the mandate, each training centre must invite a minimum of 20 candidates to participate in the dialogue.
- Post the dialogue, the recommendations from the Kaushal Yuva Samwaad are to be submitted to the Ministry

Significance

- Kaushal Yuva Samwaad will be the platform to discuss potential issues and solutions from the candidates' perspective and will give the concerned Ministry the perspective to match the aspirations of the youth with the offerings of Skill India

World Youth Skills Day (WYSD)

- To raise awareness about the importance of investing in youth skills development, the United Nations General Assembly commemorates July 15th every year, as World Youth Skills Day (WYSD).
- Theme for 2019 is Learning to learn for life and work
- This UN designated day seeks to generate greater awareness of and discussion on the importance of technical, vocational education, and training and development of marketable skills relevant to both local and global economies.
- **The aim of WYSD is** to advocate for skills as an important factor to improve young people's transitions to decent work, and to highlight the crucial role of skilled youth in addressing today's most challenging global issues.
- The World Youth Skills Day emphasizes the importance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in providing youth with the opportunities to develop their competencies and accelerate their transition to work.

Credit Guarantee scheme and Credit Linked Capital Subsidy scheme for MSMEs

(Sources: PIB and Indiafindings.com)

Credit Guarantee Scheme

The scheme facilitates credit to the MSE units by covering collateral free credit facility (term loan and /or working capital) extended by eligible lending institutions to new and existing micro and small enterprises.

Key highlights

- The scheme provides benefit to a Startup that is recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (previously called DIPP) according to the Gazette Notifications that is issued from time to time.
- For all resident Directors/ partners, the Aadhaar card would be made mandatory, and for all non-resident directors/ partners, the passport number would be made as a necessary part as per the KYC norms.
- **The Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) under the scheme** can be SEBI registered AIFs; RBI registered Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), Scheduled Commercial banks and Financial Institutions, etc.
- **The scheme functions under the trusteeship management of the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC).**
- The instruments for assistance can be in the form of venture debt, working capital, debentures, optionally convertible debt, etc.
- MLIs offers loans up to any amount as required by an eligible borrower. Therefore, through this scheme, the exposure to avail credit guarantee would be limited to Rs. 500 lakh per eligible borrower. These loans would be extended by MLIs without any security and third party guarantee.
- **The Management Committee (MS)** would be made responsible for the overall supervision and monitoring of the Credit Guarantee Scheme for startups.
- **A Risk Evaluation Committee (REC)** would also be formed to address the conflict of interest.
- Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups is provided to cover up to 75% of the credit facility up to Rs. 150 lakh.
- The scheme also covers upto 85% of credit facility for loans less than Rs. 5 lakh and offered to micro-enterprises.
- Further, the scheme covers upto 80% of credit facility for MSMEs that are operated/ owned by women and all loans to NER with the inclusion of Sikkim. For MSME retail trade, the guarantee cover offered is 50% of the amount – to a maximum of Rs. 50 lakh.

Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme**Objectives**

- To facilitate technology up-gradation in MSEs by providing an upfront capital subsidy of 15 per cent (on institutional finance of upto Rs 1 crore availed by them) for induction of well-established and improved technology in the specified 51 sub-sectors/products approved.
- To upgrade their plant & machinery with state-of-the-art technology, with or without expansion and also for new MSEs which have set up their facilities

with appropriate eligible and proven technology duly approved under scheme guidelines.

Nature of assistance

The revised scheme aims at facilitating technology up-gradation by providing 15% up front capital subsidy to MSEs, including tiny, khadi, village and coir industrial units, on institutional finance availed by them for induction of well established and improved technologies in the specified sub-sectors/products approved under the scheme.

Current status of the scheme

The Indian Government has commended the three-year extension of the CLCS scheme for MSEs with the general expenditure of Rs. 2,900 crores. The scheme has been authorised for continuation from 2017-2018 to 2019-2020

Eligibility criteria for financial assistance

The incubation support will be provided by the following host Institutions they are;

- Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)
- National Institutes of Technology (NITs)
- Engineering Colleges
- Technology Development Centres, Tool Rooms, etc
- Other recognised R&D&/or Technical Institutes/Centres, Development Institutes of DIP&P in the field of Paper, Rubber, Machine Tools, etc.

ASPIRE- A Scheme for Promotion of Innovation, Rural Industries and Entrepreneurship

It was launched by Ministry of MSME to set up a network of technology centres and to set up incubation centres to accelerate entrepreneurship and also to promote startups for innovation in agro industry.

Objectives

- Create new jobs and reduce unemployment
- Promote entrepreneurship culture in India
- Grassroots economic development at district level
- Facilitate innovative business solution for unmet social needs
- Promote innovation to further strengthen the competitiveness of MSME sector.

Nature of assistance under the scheme

- 80 Livelihood business incubators (2014-2016) to be set up by NSIC (National Small Industrial Corporation of India), KVIC (Khadi and Village Industries Commission) or Coir Board or any other Institution/agency of GoI/State Govt. on its own or by any of the agency/Scheme for promotion of

Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Agro-Industry organisation of the M/o MSME, one-time grant of 100% of the cost of Plant & Machinery other than the land and infrastructure or an amount up to Rs.100 lakhs whichever is less to be provided

- In case of incubation centres to be set up under PPP mode with NSIC, KVIC or Coir Board or any other Institution/agency of GoI/State Govt., one-time grant of 50% of the cost of Plant & Machinery other than the land and infrastructure or Rs.50.00 lakhs, whichever is less to be provided
- Assistance towards the training cost of incubates will be met out of the ATI scheme (Assistance to Training Institutions) of the Ministry as far as possible for both centres

2019 budget and ASPIRE scheme:

The Finance Minister in her budget speech also mentioned 'consolidating' the Scheme for Promotion of Innovation, Rural Industry, and Entrepreneurship' (ASPIRE) for setting up of Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs) and Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) to develop 75,000 skilled entrepreneurs in agro-rural industry sectors.

National Translation Mission

(Sources: PIB and NTM website)

About the National Translation Mission

- It was launched in 2008
- National Translation Mission (NTM) is a Government of India scheme **to establish translation as an industry in general** and, to facilitate higher education by making knowledge texts accessible to students and academics in Indian languages in particular.
- **The vision** of NTM is to create a knowledge society by transcending language barriers.
- **NTM aims** to disseminate knowledge in all Indian languages listed in the VIII schedule of the Constitution through translation. **NTM also aims to open up the vast body of knowledge by translating the higher education texts**, available mostly in English, into Indian languages. It is expected that this process will eventually pave the way for the constitution of an inclusive knowledge society.
- The scheme is being **implemented through the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore** to establish translation as an industry in general and to facilitate higher education by making knowledge texts accessible to students and academics in Indian languages.
- Under the mission a combination of efforts is made to orient translators, encourage publishers to publish translations, maintain databases of published translations from, into and between

Indian languages and to become a clearing house of information on translation.

- **Mission's long-term goals would be to;**

1. Provide support for research and development on software for translation memory, word-finders, word net etc.
2. Offer fellowships & grants for Natural Language Processing and translation related research projects.
3. Provide grants to Universities/Departments conducting Degree/Diploma courses on translation, for specific projects such as preparation of translation manuals between pairs of languages
4. Support journals on translation or publishing translation-related texts and analysis etc in Indian languages
5. Lend visibility to translators and translation activities by organizing events like book launches for translations, regional translation festivals, discussions, book exhibitions, etc.
6. Build a reservoir of serious academic works on Translation Studies and thus facilitate discourses on the same.
7. Establish translation as a viable profession and give rise to a translation industry.

- **Beneficiaries:** NTM aims at the formation of an inclusive knowledge society. The mission seeks to promote equal distribution of knowledge by facilitating translation of seminal texts from one language to another. This, in turn will equip students who find it difficult to access knowledge because of a language barrier. NTM also aims to benefit a large number of people cutting across various walks of life.

1. Teachers of various subjects at various levels
2. Authors/Translators/ Publishers.
3. Departments of Translation Studies, Linguistics and researchers from various universities and institutions
4. Publishers in Indian languages looking for new and interesting ventures
5. Translation software developers,
6. Scholars of Comparative literature.
7. Readers looking for literary and knowledge texts in their own languages
8. Volunteers engaged in providing non-formal education
9. NGOs working on public health, civil rights, environment, popular science etc.
10. Government and private agencies and individuals looking for interpreters
11. Film producers looking for subtitles and multilingual releases
12. FM and other radio houses who need to air programmes in different languages

- **Translation of books:** Under the scheme, the books of knowledge texts mostly text books of

various subjects prescribed in Universities and Colleges are being translated in all Languages of the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India.

- National Translation Mission has so far published 40 Knowledge Text translations in 16 languages in collaboration with Pearson Education, India.

The Code on Wages 2019

(Source: PIB and PRS India)

The code seeks to regulate wage and bonus payments in all employments where any industry, trade, business, or manufacturing is carried out.

Key features

- **Replacement of four labour laws**

The Code replaces the following four laws:

1. The Payment of Wages Act, 1936.
2. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948.
3. The Payment of Bonus Act, 1965, and
4. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.

- **Application and decision making body:** The proposed code will **apply to all employees**. The **central government** will make wage-related decisions for employments such as railways, mines, and oil fields, among others. State governments will make decisions for all other employments.

- **Wages under the code:** Wages **include salary, allowance**, or any other component expressed in monetary terms. This **does not include bonus** payable to employees or any travelling allowance, among others.

- **Floor wage to be fixed by the government:** According to the Code, the central government will fix a floor wage, **taking into account the living standards of workers**. Further, it may set **different floor wages for different geographical areas**. Before fixing the floor wage, the central government may obtain the advice of the **Central Advisory Board** and may consult with state governments. As per the code the minimum wages decided by the central or state governments must be higher than the floor wage.

- **Minimum Wages:** The Code prohibits employers from paying wages less than the minimum wages. Minimum wages will be notified by the central or state governments. This will be based on time, or number of pieces produced. The minimum wages will be revised and reviewed by the central or state governments at an interval of not more than five years.

- **Fixing the minimum wages:** While fixing minimum wages, the central or state governments may take into account factors such as:

1. Skill of workers, and
2. Difficulty of work.

- **Working hours and Overtime:** The number of hours that constitute a normal working day may be fixed by the Central or State government. In case employees work in excess of a normal working day, they will be entitled to overtime wage, which must be at least twice the normal rate of wages.

- **Wages and Wage period;** coins, currency notes, by cheque, by crediting to the bank account, or through electronic mode. The **wage period** will be fixed by the employer as either: daily, weekly, fortnightly, or monthly.

- **Grounds for deduction of wages:** According to the Code, an employee's wages may be deducted on certain grounds including:

1. Fines.
2. Absence from duty
3. Accommodation given by the employer, or
4. Recovery of advances given to the employee, among others.

It also mentions that these deductions **should not exceed 50% of the employee's total wage**.

- **Advisory boards and their composition:** The central and state governments will constitute advisory boards. **The Central Advisory Board will consist of:**

1. Employers
2. Employees (in equal number as employers)
3. Independent persons, and
4. Five representatives of state governments.

State Advisory Boards will consist of employers, employees, and independent persons. Further, one-third of the total members on both the central and state Boards will be women. **The Boards will advise** the respective governments on various issues including fixation of minimum wages, and increasing employment opportunities for women.

- **Penalties and offences under the code:** It specifies penalties for offences committed by an employer, such as paying less than the due wages, or for contravening any provision of the Code. Penalties vary depending on the nature of offence, with the maximum penalty being imprisonment for three months along with a fine of up to one lakh rupees.

DNA Technology (Use & Application) Regulation Bill 2019

(Source: PIB and PRS India)

The bill has been introduced for the regulation of use and application of DNA technology for the purpose of establishing identity of missing persons, victims, offenders, under trials and unknown deceased persons.

Purpose of the Bill

Expanding the application of DNA-based forensic technologies to support and strengthen the justice delivery system of the country.

Key features of the Bill

- **Use of DNA Data:** Under the proposed Bill, **DNA testing is allowed only in** respect of matters listed in the Schedule to the Bill. These include **offences under the Indian Penal Code, 1860, and for civil matters such as paternity suits**. Further, the Schedule includes **DNA testing for matters related to establishment of individual identity**.

Collection of DNA and consent : While preparing a DNA profile, bodily substances of persons may be collected by the investigating authorities in the following manner;

1. **For arrested persons**, authorities are required to obtain written consent if the offence carries a punishment of up to seven years.
 2. **If the offence carries more than seven years** of imprisonment or death, **consent is not required**.
 3. Further, **if the person is a victim, or relative of a missing person**, or a minor or disabled person, the authorities are **required to obtain the written consent** of such victim, or relative, or parent or guardian of the minor or disabled person. If consent is not given in these cases, the authorities can approach a Magistrate who may order the taking of bodily substances of such persons.
- **DNA Data Bank:** The Bill provides for the establishment of a **National DNA Data Bank and Regional DNA Data Banks, for every state, or two or more states**. DNA laboratories are required to share DNA data prepared by them with the National and Regional DNA Data Banks. **Every Data Bank will be required to maintain indices for the following categories of data:**
 1. A crime scene index,
 2. A suspects' or undertrials' index
 3. An offenders' index
 4. A missing persons' index, and
 5. An unknown deceased persons' index.
 - **Removal of DNA profiles:** The Bill states that the criteria for entry, retention, or removal of the DNA profile will be specified by regulations. However, **the Bill provides for removal of the DNA profiles of the following persons:**
 1. Of a suspect if a police report is filed or court order given,
 2. Of an undertrial if a court order is given, and
 3. On written request, for persons who are not suspect, offender or undertrial, from the crime scene or missing persons' index.
 - **DNA Regulatory Board:** The Bill also provides for the establishment of a DNA Regulatory Board,

which will **supervise the DNA Data Banks and DNA laboratories**. The Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, will be the ex officio Chairperson of the Board. The Board will comprise additional **members** including experts in the field of biological sciences, and Director General of the National Investigation Agency and the Director of the **Central Bureau of Investigation**.

- **Functions of the Board:** Following are the functions of the Board:
 1. Advising governments on all issues related to establishing DNA laboratories or Data Banks, and
 2. Granting accreditation to DNA laboratories.
 3. Further, the Board is required to ensure that all information relating to DNA profiles with the Data Banks, laboratories, and other persons are kept confidential.
- **DNA laboratories:** The bill mentions that any laboratory undertaking DNA testing is required to **obtain accreditation from the Board**. The Board may revoke the accreditation for reasons including failure to undertake DNA testing, or comply with the conditions attached to the accreditation. If the accreditation is revoked, an appeal will lie before the central government or any other authority notified by the central government. Further, every DNA laboratory is required **to follow standards for quality assurance in collection, storing, and analysis of DNA samples**. After depositing the DNA profile for criminal cases, the **laboratory is required to return the biological sample to the investigating officer**.
- **Offences under the bill:** It specifies penalties for various offences, including:
 1. For disclosure of DNA information, or
 2. Using DNA sample without authorization. For instance, disclosure of DNA information will be punishable with imprisonment of up to three years and fine of up to one lakh rupees.

Significance of the bill

- The proposed legislation will empower the criminal justice delivery system by enabling the application of DNA evidence, which is considered the gold standard in crime investigations.
- Establishment of the National and Regional DNA Data Banks, as envisaged in the Bill, will assist in forensic investigations.
- The proposed Bill will give fillip to the development of uniform code of practices in all laboratories involved in DNA testing throughout the country. This will aid in **scientific upgradation and streamlining of the DNA testing activities in the country** with appropriate inputs from the DNA Regulatory Board which would be set up for the purpose.

- It is expected that the expanded use of this scientifically driven technology would empower the existing justice delivery system.

AN 32 Aircraft

The Indian Air Force has lost its fifth Antonov AN-32 military transport aircraft. The twin-engine plane went missing on June 3 after taking off from Jorhat in Assam with 13 air force personnel on board. It was flying to an Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) in Arunachal Pradesh near China border.

Key Highlights

- An-32 is a **twin engine, tactical light transport aircraft** designed and manufactured by Antonov Design Bureau of Ukraine for the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- The An-32 is derived from the An-26 transport aircraft.
- A total of 240 An-32s are currently operational worldwide.
- An-32 has ten variants of An-32A, An-32B, An-32B-100, An-32B-110, An-32B-120, An-32B-300, An-32LL, An-32MP, An-32P Firekiller, and An-32B-200
- Designed to suit both military and civil operations, the An-32 can take-off and land on rough airfields and dirt runways.
- The aircraft is designed to manoeuvre day and night in tropical and mountainous regions, even in hot climatic conditions (up to 55°C).
- An-32 features advanced cargo handling devices and a cargo door fitted with a ramp to ease the loading or unloading of freight.
- It is also incorporated with an upper cargo handling device to load and unload 3,000kg of payload.
- An-32 can fly at a maximum speed of 530km/h and its cruise speed is 470km/h.
- The range and service ceiling of the aircraft are 2,500km and 9,500m, respectively

Defence Industrial Corridor in India

Background

India topped the list of arms importer accounting for 13 % of the trade in weapons platform between 2012-2018, according to data released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Finance Minister in the budget speech (2018-19) had announced setting up of two Defence Industrial Corridors in the country.

In pursuance of the said announcement, it was decided to set up one of these Corridors in Uttar Pradesh and another in **Tamil Nadu**. Subsequently, six nodes have

been identified for **Uttar Pradesh** Corridor and five for Tamil Nadu Corridor.

About the Industrial Corridors

Presently the Government announced two Corridors in India they are;

- Tamil Nadu**-It links five regional cities: Chennai, Hosur, Coimbatore, Salem, and Tiruchirappalli.
- Uttar Pradesh** - India's other defence industrial corridor is planned for the northern region of Bundelkhand, which lies between the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. This is intended to link cities including Agra, Allahabad, Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, and Chitrakoot.

Importance of the Corridor

- The setting up of Defence Corridor will facilitate the development of internationally competitive enterprises to manufacture and maintain all major defence ecosystem and platforms within the country in order to become strategically independent in defence manufacturing.
- The development of these corridors will not only help in accelerated growth and regional industry agglomeration, but will also facilitate a well-planned and efficient industrial base which will lead to increased defence production in the country and the region.
- This will also help the industry to integrate with the global supply chain of Defence manufacturing.

National School of Drama

Key highlights about NSD

- The National School of Drama is **one of the foremost theatre training institutions in the world and the only one of its kind in India**.
- It was set up by the Sangeet Natak Akademi as one of its constituent units in 1959. In 1975, it became an independent entity and was registered as an autonomous organization under the Societies Registration Act of 1860, fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
- Training:** Training in the School is highly intensive and is based on a thorough, comprehensive, carefully planned syllabus which covers every aspect of theatre and in which theory is related to practice. As a part of their training, students are required to produce plays which are then performed before the public.
- Under the school, the syllabus takes into account the methods of great theatre personalities who have shaped contemporary theatre in all its variety.
- Coverage of various schools of Drama:** The systematic study and practical performing experience of Sanskrit drama, modern Indian drama, traditional Indian theatre forms, Asian

drama and western dramatic protocols give the students a solid grounding and a wide perspective in the art of theatre.

- Besides its 3-year training programme, the School has also explored new vistas in the areas of children's theatre and **decentralization of theatre training** through workshops under the Extension Programme.
- The School has **two performing wings**, which includes;
 - The Repertory Company and
 - Theatre-in-Education Company.

The Repertory Company

- The Repertory Company was started in 1964 with four artistes – Shri Ramamurthy, Ms. Meena Williams, Ms. Sudha Shivpuri and Shri Om Shivpuri – with the objective of providing a platform where graduates of the School could perform plays professionally.
- Over the years it has presented works of various playwrights and directors who have been associated with it and has evolved into one of NSD's major institutions, working on contemporary and modern plays as well as introducing experimental work on a regular basis. In addition to doing productions, it organizes its own Festival, where past and new productions are introduced and staged each summer.
- NSD's Repertory Company also tours and performs extensively in India and abroad.

Theatre-In-Education Company

- The second performing wing the 'Theatre-In-Education Company' (Sanskar Rang Toli) was established in October 16, 1989, and is one of the most important theatre education resource centres in the country.
- It consists of a group of actor-teachers working with and performing for children.**
- The major focus** of the TIE Company is to perform creative, curriculum-based and participatory plays in schools, specially designed and prepared for children of different age groups.
- The major thrust** of the plays is to create an atmosphere that encourages children to raise questions, take decisions and make choices with an awareness of themselves within the larger social context.

In addition to these two wings, the School also has an active **Extension Programme**, a **publication section** and a **literary forum** named Shruti.

The Extension Programme,

- EPunder which NSD faculty and alumni conduct workshops in various parts of the country, was launched in 1978 and since then has conducted workshops and programmes for adults and

children across the country, and in Nepal, Sikkim, Ladakh and Bhutan as well.

- The 'Traditional Theatre Project** initiated in 1980, has facilitated creative interaction between traditional and contemporary theatre artists on a regular basis.
- Along with an introduction to theatre, these workshops also seek to develop personality and expand the emotional horizons of the participants.

The Publication Unit of the National School of Drama

- It is responsible for publishing textbooks on theatre, arranging for the translation of important books on theatre from English into Hindi and bringing out other important books on theatre.
- The unit's first major publication titled **Rang Yatra** which chronicled 25 years history of the NSD Repertory Company from 1964 onwards, came out in 1990.
- Besides its regular publications, until 2010 the unit has brought out 82 publications on drama and related subjects

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, established in memory of Smt. Indira Gandhi, is visualised as a centre encompassing the study and experience of all the arts – each form with its own integrity, yet within a dimension of mutual interdependence, interrelated with nature, social structure and cosmology.

Aims and Objectives

- To serve as a major resource centre for the arts**, especially written, oral and visual source materials
- To undertake **research and publication programmes of reference works**, glossaries, dictionaries and encyclopaedia concerning the arts and the humanities
- To establish a tribal and folk arts** division with a core collection for conducting systematic scientific studies and for live presentations.
- To provide a **forum for a creative and critical dialogue through performances**, exhibitions, multi-media projections, conferences, seminars and workshops between and amongst the diverse arts, traditional and contemporary
- To foster dialogue between arts and current ideas in philosophy, science and technology**, with a view toward bridging the gap in intellectual understanding between modern sciences and arts and culture
- To evolve models of research programmes and arts administration more pertinent to the Indian ethos

- To elucidate the formative and dynamic factors in the complex web of interactions between diverse social strata, communities and regions
- To promote a network with national and international institutions; and
- To conduct related research in the arts, humanities and culture

Five different divisions which represent its principles under IGNCA

1. **The Asvattha-** It is associated with the SUTRADHARA
2. **The Nyagrodha-** It is associated with the landscaping of JANAPADA SAMPADA .
3. **The Asoka-** It is associated with KALANIDHI .
4. **The Arjuna-** It is associated with KALAKOSA
5. **The Kadamba-** It is associated with KALADARSHANA

Scope

- The arts are here understood to comprise the fields of creative and critical literature, written and oral
- The visual arts, ranging from architecture, sculpture, painting and graphics to general material culture, photography and film.
- The performing arts of music, dance and theatre in their broadest connotation; and
- All else in fairs, festivals and lifestyle that has an artistic dimension
- In its initial stages the Centre will focus attention on India; it will later expand its horizons to other civilizations and cultures

How it works?

- **Through diverse programmes of research, publication, training, creative activities and performance**, the IGNCA seeks to place the arts within the context of the natural and human environment.
- The fundamental approach of the Centre is all its work will be both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary.

Preserving Indian culture and working with UNDP

- Recognizing the need to encompass and preserve the distributed fragments of Indian art and culture, **a pioneering attempt has been made by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) to serve as a major resource centre for the arts, especially written, oral and visual materials.**
- One of the programmes of this centre, in collaboration with UNDP, is to utilize multimedia computer technology to create a wide variety of software packages that communicate cultural information. Multimedia technology allows the user to interact and explore the subject in a non-linear mode by combining audio, text, graphics, animation and video on a computer.

Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006

Purpose of the Act

To address the adverse living conditions of many tribal families living in forests was on account of non-recognition and vesting of pre-existing rights, a landmark legislation viz. Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, has been enacted **to recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation of forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers**, who have been residing in such forests for generations, but whose rights could not be recorded.

Key highlights of the Act

- This Act not only recognizes the rights to hold and live in the forest land under the individual or common occupation for habitation or for self-cultivation for livelihood, but also grants several other rights to ensure their control over forest resources which, inter-alia, include:
 - a. Right of ownership.
 - b. Access to collect, use and dispose of minor forest produce, community rights such as nistar;
 - c. Habitat rights for primitive tribal groups and pre-agricultural communities
 - d. Tight to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forest resource which they have been traditionally protecting and conserving for sustainable use.
- The Act also provides for diversion of forest land for public utility facilities managed by the Government, such as schools, dispensaries, fair price shops, electricity and telecommunication lines, water tanks, etc. with the recommendation of Gram Sabhas.
- In addition, several schemes have been implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for the benefit of tribal people, including those in the forest areas such as "Mechanism for marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and development of Value Chain for MFP".
- Funds are released out of Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Plan for infrastructure work relating to basic services and facilities viz. approach roads, healthcare, primary education, minor irrigation, rainwater harvesting, drinking water, sanitation, community halls, etc. for development of forest villages.

- **Recognition of rights:** Under Section the Act, the rights of settlement and conversion of all forest villages, old habitations, un-surveyed villages and other villages in forest, whether recorded, notified, or not, into revenue villages have been recognized as one of the forest rights of forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers on all forest lands.
- **Villages into Revenue villages:** As per the provisions of the Act and the rules framed thereunder, the forest right related to conversion of forest villages into revenue villages is to be adjudicated by the Gram Sabha, Sub-Divisional Level Committee and the District Level Committee as per the laid down procedure, like any other forest right specified in the Act.
- In pursuit to the act the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has issued guidelines in 2013, inter-alia, impressing upon all the State/ UT Governments to convert all such erstwhile forest villages, un-recorded settlements and old habitations into revenue villages with a sense of urgency in a time bound manner.
- The conversion would include the actual land use of the village in its entirety, including land required for current or future community uses, like, schools, health facilities, public spaces etc

UN World Food Programme in India

Why India?

- India is the second most populous country in the world, it has enjoyed steady economic growth and has achieved self-sufficiency in grain production in recent years. Despite this, **high levels of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition persist.**
- Around **21.25 percent of the population lives on less than US\$1.90 a day, and levels of inequality and social exclusion are very high.**
- **India is home to a quarter of all undernourished people worldwide**, making the country a key focus for tackling hunger on a global scale.
- In the last two decades, per capita income more than tripled, yet the **minimum dietary intake fell.**
- **The gap between rich and poor increased** during this period of high economic growth.

Background and

WFP has been working in India since 1963, with work transitioning from food distribution to technical assistance since the country achieved self-sufficiency in cereal production. With the Government now providing its own food distribution systems, our work focuses on supporting the strengthening of these systems to ensure they become more efficient and reach the people who need them most.

About World Food Programme

- It is the **UN agency focused on hunger alleviation and food security.**
- Globally, it responds to emergencies making sure food reaches where it is needed, especially in times of civil strife and natural disasters.
- In India, WFP has moved from providing direct food aid to providing technical assistance and capacity building services to the Government of India.
- WFP is focusing on enabling the country's food-based social safety nets to function more efficiently and effectively in providing food to their target population.

Focus Areas of WFP are;

- Food and Nutrition Security.
- Strengthening food-based safety nets.
- Policy reform to enhance food and nutrition security.
- Fortification of food.
- Food security mapping and analysis.
- Addressing nutrition concerns during the first 1000 days of life.
- Addressing nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons.

Nehru Yuva Kendras

Origin

- Nehru Yuva Kendras were **established in the year 1972 with the objective of providing rural youth avenues to take part in the process of nation building** as well providing opportunities for the **development of their personality and skills.**
- In the year 1987-88, **Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)** was set up as an **autonomous organization under the Government of India, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, to oversee working of these Kendras.**
- **NYKS is the largest grassroots level youth organization;** one of its kind in the world. It channelizes the power of youth on the **principles of voluntarism, self-help and community participation.**
- At present, there are Nehru Yuva Kendras functions in as many as 623 districts of the country.
- **District based kendras and Zonal Offices:** In order to manage, administer and run the 623 district based Nehru Yuva Kendras, Zonal Offices in the States have been established by NYKS.
- The NYKS has its head office in New Delhi.

Objectives of NYKS are twofold they are;

- To involve the rural youth in nation building activities.

- To develop such skills and values in them with which they become responsible and productive citizens of a modern, secular and technological nation.

Programme of the NYKS

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan has been working in various fronts of youth development with a variety of youth programmes of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and certain special programmes in coordination and cooperation of other ministries. Main focus has been on developing values of good citizenship, thinking and behaving in secular ways, skill development and helping youth to adopt a productive and organized behaviour.

Core Programmes in a district

- Youth club development programme
- Training on youth leadership and community development
- Promotion of sports
- Education in basic vocations and Soft skills
- District level promotion of Art and Culture
- Observance of days of National importance, National Youth Day and week
- District youth convention
- Awards to outstanding Youth Clubs at District, State and National level.
- Mahatma Gandhi Yuva swachhata Maha Abhiyan evam Shramadaan Karyakram.
- Yuva Adarsh Gram Vikas Yojana.

Mission for Empowerment and Protection for Women

The National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) was operationalised during 2011-12 with the aim of achieving holistic empowerment of women. **The focus was to bring convergence of efforts through inter-sectoral coordination amongst different ministries and programmes**, with the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) acting as the nodal agency.

Following the restructuring during the 12th Plan period, NMEW was approved for **continuation as a sub-scheme of the Umbrella Scheme for Protection and Development of Women**. Under the revised Scheme, technical support to MWCD is being provided by domain experts who are involved in the implementation and monitoring of new initiatives of the Ministry like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP Scheme), One Stop Centres, Women Helpline etc. and also facilitates convergence of schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments with focus on women.

Objectives

- The objective of NMEW is to strengthen the processes that promote holistic development of women, gender equality and gender justice through inter-sectoral convergence of programmes impacting women, forging synergy amongst various stakeholders and creating an enabling environment conducive to social change.
- It will also strive to integrate gender concerns into the training curriculum of the training institutes (administrative, academic, police, legal, health, skill development, rural development etc.) as well as prepare training modules for functionaries at various levels.
- It would also undertake research, evaluation and reviews of programmes and legislation, gender audit and outcome assessment to build evidence for policy intervention and programmatic reform.

NMEW would also focus on Training and Capacity Building to enhance and strengthen understanding of gender issues, and build a Resource Pool (trainers) at the National and State level to bridge gaps between knowledge and practice. At the national level, **experts would be engaged in the area of:**

- Poverty alleviation and economic empowerment
- Health and nutrition
- Gender budgeting and Gender mainstreaming
- Gender rights, gender based violence and law enforcement
- Empowerment of vulnerable and marginalised groups
- Social empowerment and education
- Media and advocacy
- Information technology.

National Child Labour Project

The NCLP Scheme seeks:

- **To eliminate all forms of child labour through**
 - Identification and withdrawal of all children in the Project Area from child labour,
 - Preparing children withdrawn from work for mainstream education along with vocational training;
 - Ensuring convergence of services provided by different government departments/agencies for the benefit of the child and their family;
- **To contribute to the withdrawal of all adolescent workers from Hazardous Occupations / Processes and their skilling and integration in appropriate occupations through**
 - Identification and withdrawal of all adolescent workers from hazardous occupations / processes

- Facilitating vocational training opportunities for such adolescents through existing scheme of skill developments
- **Raising awareness** amongst stakeholders and target communities, and orientation of NCLP and other functionaries on the issues of 'child labour' and 'employment of adolescent workers in hazardous occupations/processes'; and
- **Creation of a Child Labour Monitoring, Tracking and Reporting System.**

The scheme focuses on:

- All child workers below the age of 14 years in the identified target area.
- Adolescent workers below the age of 18 years in the target area engaged in hazardous occupations / processes²
- Families of Child workers in the identified target area

Key highlights

- The overall approach of the project is to create an enabling environment in the target area, where children are motivated and empowered through various measures to enroll in schools and refrain from working, and households are provided with alternatives to improve their income levels
- NCLPS will be implemented in close coordination with State, District administration and Civil society. Elimination of Child Labour is joint responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the State Governments.
- Other stakeholders such as District Administrations, local communities, civil society groups, NGO"s, academicians and enforcement agencies have an important role to play.
- The scheme seeks to not only set up the implementation structure but also institutionalize monitoring and supervision for effective functioning of the scheme.
- **NCLPS is a central sector scheme where 100%** of the funding is provided by the Government of India through the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
- Funds under the existing NCLP scheme are released by the Central Government directly to the registered NCLP District Project Society under the chairpersonship of the administrative head of the district namely District Magistrate/District Collector (DM/DC)/Deputy Commissioner of the district who is under administrative control of the State Govt.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

Background

Under - nutrition continues to adversely affect the majority of women in India. In India, every third woman is undernourished and every second woman is anaemic. An undernourished mother almost inevitably gives birth to a low birth weight baby. When poor nutrition starts in - utero, it extends throughout the life cycle since the changes are largely irreversible. Owing to economic and social distress many women continue to work to earn a living for their family right up to the last days of their pregnancy. Furthermore, they resume working soon after childbirth, even though their bodies might not permit it, thus preventing their bodies from fully recovering on one hand, and also impeding their ability to exclusively breastfeed their young infants in the first six months.

About Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

It is a Maternity Benefit Programme that is implemented in all the districts of the country in accordance with the provision of the National Food Security Act, 2013.

Objectives

- Providing partial compensation for the wage loss in terms of cash incentive s so that the woman can take adequate rest before and after delivery of the first living child.
- The cash incentive provided would lead to improved health seeking behaviour amongst Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW& LM)

Target beneficiaries

- All Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers, excluding PW&LM who are in regular employment with the Central Government or the State Governments or PSUs or those who are in receipt of similar benefits under any law for the time being in force.
- All eligible Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers who have their pregnancy on or after 01.01.2017 for first child in the family.
- The date and stage of pregnancy for a beneficiary would be counted with respect to her LMP date as mentioned in the MCP card.
- Case of Miscarriage/Still Birth :
 - A beneficiary is eligible to receive benefits under the scheme only once.
 - In case of miscarriage/still birth, the beneficiary would be eligible to claim the remaining instalment(s) in event of any future pregnancy.
 - Thus, after receiving the 1st instalment, if the beneficiary has a miscarriage, she would only be eligible for receiving 2nd and 3rd instalment in event of future pregnancy subject to fulfilment of eligibility criterion and conditionalities of the scheme. Similarly, if the beneficiary has a miscarriage or still birth after

receiving 1 st and 2nd instalments, she would only be eligible for receiving 3rd instalment in event of future pregnancy subject to fulfilment of eligibility criterion and conditionalities of the scheme.

- Case of Infant Mortality: A beneficiary is eligible to receive benefits under the scheme only once. That is, in the case of infant mortality, she will not be eligible for claiming benefits under the scheme, if she has already received all the instalments of the maternity benefit under PMMVY earlier.
- Pregnant and Lactating AWWs/ AWHs/ ASHA may also avail the benefits under the PMMVY subject to fulfilment of scheme conditionalities.

Benefits under the scheme

- Cash incentive of Rs 5000 in three instalments i.e. first instalment of Rs 1000/- on early registration of pregnancy at the Anganwadi Centre (AWC) / approved Health facility as may be identified by the respective administering State / UT, second instalment of Rs 2000/- after six months of pregnancy on receiving at least one ante-natal check-up (ANC) and third instalment of Rs 2000/- after child birth is registered and the child has received the first cycle of BCG, OPV, DPT and Hepatitis - B, or its equivalent/ substitute.
- The eligible beneficiaries would receive the incentive given under the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) for Institutional delivery and the incentive received under JSY would be accounted towards maternity benefits so that on an average a woman gets Rs 6000 / -

Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

Key facts

75 tribal groups have been categorized categorized by Ministry of Home Affairs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)s. PVTGs reside in 18 States and UT of A&N Islands.

Implementing agency

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs implements the Scheme of "Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)" exclusively for them.

About the PVTGs development scheme

- Under the scheme, Conservation-cum-Development (CCD)/Annual Plans are to be prepared by each State/UT for their PVTGs based on their need assessment, which are then appraised and approved by the Project Appraisal Committee of the Ministry.
- Activities for development of PVTGs are undertaken in Sectors of Education, Health,

Livelihood and Skill Development , Agricultural Development , Housing & Habitat, Conservation of Culture etc.

Aim and Objectives

- The scheme aims at planning their(PVTGs) socio-economic development in a comprehensive manner while retaining the culture and heritage of the community by adopting habitat development approach and intervening in all spheres of their social and economic life, so that a visible impact is made in improvement of the quality of life of PVTGs.
- The scheme follows the strategic approach of **Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana** , which is need-based and strives to optimise utilisation of resources available under various programs and aims at specific outcomes.

Scope

The scheme will cover only the 75 identified PVTGs. The scheme is flexible because it enables each State to focus on areas that they consider relevant to their PVTGs and their socio-cultural environment. Activities under it may include the following:

- (a) Livelihood,
- (b) Employment opportunities and economic development of PVTGs through Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy, and Skilling/ Vocational Training
- (c) Education, (Literacy, Drop-out, Residential schools in addition to SSA/RMSA).
- (d) Health, (Gap filling for effective health service delivery beyond NHM etc).
- (e) Provision of safe drinking water (gap filling where line Ministries do not provide complete/universal coverage),
- (f) Land distribution, land development,
- (g) Social security,
- (h) Housing and Habitat,
- (i) Connectivity (Road and Telecommunication),
- (j) Supply of Electricity (gap filling where line Ministries do not provide complete/universal coverage), Solar power, with provision of maintenance,
- (k) Irrigation (gap filling where line Ministries do not provide complete/universal coverage),
- (l) Urban Development,
- (m) Culture,
- (n) Sports including traditional and tribal games and sports,
- (o) Any other innovative activity for the comprehensive socio-economic development of PVTGs.

Implementing agencies

- The scheme will be implemented in accordance CCD Plan prepared by the State/UT and executed

through various agencies of the State Government/UT Administration like;

1. Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDPs)/Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs).
 2. Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs).
 3. State/UT Societies and
 4. (Panchayati Raj Institutions)PRIs as well as the line departments of Government of India. The State Government concerned will be responsible for proper execution, implementation, supervision and coordination of the scheme
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs can also draw up plans for the PVTGs involving reputed National level bodies, including Industry Associations, and the concerned State Governments/ Agencies.

Funding pattern

It is a 100% Central Sector Scheme. The funds will be released to States/UT in one/two instalment(s) in accordance with the annual programme proposed for a particular financial year in the CCD Plan, subject to availability of funds with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

National Mission for Transformative Mobility and Battery storage

Background

During the Global Mobility Summit held in September 2018, Prime Minister had outlined the vision for the future of mobility in India based on 7 C's which are Common, Connected, Convenient, Congestion-free, Charged, Clean and Cutting-edge mobility. Mobility has the potential to drive the economy forward and positively impact the lives of citizens both in urban and rural areas.

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved the

- Setting up of a National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage, to drive clean, connected, shared, sustainable and holistic mobility initiatives;
- **Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP)** valid for 5 years till 2024 to support setting up of a few large-scale, export-competitive integrated batteries and cell-manufacturing Giga plants in India.
- Creation of a PMP valid for 5 years till 2024 to localize production across the entire Electric Vehicles value chain.

Both PMP schemes will be finalised by the National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage.

Composition of the Mission

- The multi-disciplinary "National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage" with an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee will be chaired by CEO NITI Aayog.
- The Steering Committee will be comprised of Secretaries from Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Ministry of Power, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Heavy Industry, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, and Director General, Bureau of Industrial Standards.

Role of the Mission

- The Mission will recommend and drive the strategies for transformative mobility and Phased Manufacturing Programmes for EVs, EV Components and Batteries.
- A Phased Manufacturing Program (PMP) will be launched to localize production across the entire EV value chain. The National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage will determine the contours of PMP, and will finalise the details of such a program.
- The details of the value addition that can be achieved with each phase of localisation will be finalised by the Mission with a clear Make in India strategy for the electric vehicle components as well as battery.
- The Mission will coordinate with key stakeholders in Ministries/ Departments and the states to integrate various initiatives to transform mobility in India.

Roadmaps of the Mission

- A phased roadmap to implement battery manufacturing at Giga-scale will be considered with initial focus on **large-scale module and pack assembly plants by 2019-20, followed by integrated cell manufacturing by 2021-22.**
- Details of the PMP for Batteries shall be formulated by the Mission. The Mission will ensure holistic and comprehensive growth of the battery manufacturing industry in India.
- The Mission will prepare the necessary roadmap that will enable India to leverage upon its size and scale to produce innovative, competitive multi-modal mobility solutions that can be deployed globally in diverse contexts.
- **The Mission will define the roadmap for transformative mobility in "New India" by introducing a sustainable mobility ecosystem and fostering Make-in-India to boost domestic manufacturing and employment generation in the country.**

Significance and Impact of the Mission

- The Mission will drive mobility solutions that will bring significant benefits to the industry, economy and country.

- These solutions will help improve air quality in cities along with reducing India's oil import dependence and enhance the uptake of renewable energy and storage solutions.
- The Mission will lay down the strategy and roadmap which will enable India to leverage upon its size and scale to develop a competitive domestic manufacturing ecosystem for electric mobility.
- The actions in this regard will benefit all citizens as the aim is to promote 'Ease of Living' and enhance the quality of life of our citizens and also provide employment opportunities through 'Make-in-India' across a range of skill sets.

Lateral Entry in Bureaucracy

Background

Government has, from time to time, appointed some prominent persons for specific assignments in government, keeping in view their specialized knowledge and expertise in the domain area. **NITI Aayog, in its three year Action Agenda, and the Sectoral Group of Secretaries (SGoS) on Governance**, in its report submitted in February, 2017, have **recommended for induction of personnel in the middle and senior management level in the Government**. Based on this, it has been decided, in principle, to appoint outside experts to 10 positions of Joint Secretary in identified Ministries/Departments and 40 positions at Deputy Secretary/Director level.

What is Lateral entry?

Lateral entry means the appointment of specialists from the private sector in government organisations.

The selection process

- Advertisement inviting applications from individuals for the post of Joint Secretary in ten identified Ministries/Departments was issued by DoPT.
- The entire selection process of the candidates was entrusted to Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- The UPSC, after conducting the selection process, has recommended nine individuals for appointment as Joint Secretary in nine identified Ministries/Departments.
- The appointment of outside experts was made through open advertisement and the selection and evaluation process was entrusted to the UPSC.

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SFURTI - Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries

It was launched by The Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in the year 2005 with a view to **promote Cluster development**.

As per the revised guidelines, the following schemes are being merged into SFURTI:

1. The Scheme for Enhancing Productivity and Competitiveness of Khadi Industry and Artisans
2. The Scheme for Product Development, Design Intervention and Packaging (PRODIP)
3. The Scheme for Rural Industries Service Center (RISC) and
4. Other small interventions like Ready Warp Units, Ready to Wear Mission, etc.

Objectives of the scheme

- To organize the traditional industries and artisans into clusters to make them competitive and provide support for their long term sustainability and economy of scale;
- To provide sustained employment for traditional industry artisans and rural entrepreneurs;
- To enhance marketability of products of such clusters by providing support for new products, design intervention and improved packaging and also the improvement of marketing infrastructure;
- To equip traditional artisans of the associated clusters with the improved skills and capabilities through training and exposure visits;
- To make provision for common facilities and improved tools and equipment for artisans to promote optimum utilization of infrastructure facilities;
- To strengthen the cluster governance systems with the active participation of the stakeholders, so that they are able to gauge the emerging challenges and opportunities and respond to them in a coherent manner;
- To build up innovated and traditional skills, improved technologies, advanced processes, market intelligence and new models of public - private partnership s, so as to gradually replicate similar models of cluster - based regenerated traditional industries
- To look for setting up of multi-product cluster with integrated value chain and a strong market driven approach for viability and long term sustainability of the cluster;
- To ensure convergence from the design stage with each activity of the cluster formation and operations thereof.
- To identify and understand cluster"s target customers, understand their needs and aspirations

and develop and present product lines to meet the requirement. Substantial focus should be on the buyer segment that places a premium on natural, eco-friendly, ethically sourced and the uniqueness of the Khadi and VI products.

- To develop specific product lines out of the currently offered diversified basket of heterogeneous products based on the understanding of the target consumer segment. A brand unification exercise also needs to be done to maximize the value.
- To make a paradigm shift from a supply driven selling model to a market driven model with the right branding, focus product mix and correct positioning and right pricing to make the offering holistic and optimal for each of the focus categories.
- To tap the E-Commerce as a major marketing channel given the outreach and the growing market penetration of E-Commerce, there is a need to devise a quick strategy to make its presence felt in the E - Retail space.
- To make substantial investment in the area of product design and quality improvement. There is a need to standardise the quality of inputs and processes so that the products meet the quality benchmarks. Research needs to be done to develop new textures and finishes to cater to the prevailing market trends.

Criteria for Selection of Clusters

- The selection of clusters will be based on their geographical concentration which should be around 500 beneficiary families of artisans/micro enterprises, suppliers of raw materials, traders, service providers, etc., located within one or two revenue sub-divisions in a District (or in contiguous Districts).
- The clusters would be from khadi, coir and village industries, including leather and pottery.
- The potential for growth in production and generation of employment opportunities will also be considered in selecting clusters under SFURTI.
- The geographical distribution of the clusters throughout the country, with at least 10 per cent located in the North Eastern region, will also be kept in view while selecting clusters.

Nodal Agencies for the scheme are;

- Khadi and Village Industries Commission - for Khadi and Village Industry clusters
- Coir Board - Coir based clusters

Implementing agencies:

Implementing Agencies (IAs) would be

- Non-Government organizations (NGOs).
- Institutions of the Central and State Governments and semi - Government institutions,
- Field functionaries of State and Central Govt.

- Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs), etc. with suitable expertise to undertake cluster development.

One IA will be assigned for only one cluster (unless it is an agency with State - wide coverage). The selection of IAs, based on their regional reputation and experience of working at the grass - roots level, will be done by the Nodal Agencies (NAs), on the basis of transparent criteria.

Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP)

Background

- Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme of Government of India (TEQIP), implemented as a World Bank assisted Project to improve the quality of technical education system in the country.
- The Ministry of Human Resource Development **launched in December, 2002. It aims to upscale and support ongoing efforts in improving the quality of technical education** and enhancing existing capacities of the institutions to become dynamic, demand-driven, quality conscious, efficient and forward looking, responsive to rapid economic and technological developments occurring both at national and international levels.
- The Programme was conceived and designed as a long term project to be implemented in 10-12 years in 3 phases to support excellence and transformation in Technical Education in the country.

Phases of the programme

TEQIP Phase - I

- TEQIP Phase I was **implemented with the assistance of World Bank as a Centrally coordinated Central and State Sector Project.**
- 127 Institutions participated in TEQIP, out of which 18 were Centrally Funded Institutions and 109 were State Institutions. The State Institutions were from 13 States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.
- The 18 Central institutions include 17 NITs and NIFT, Ranchi. The 109 State Institutions include 90 Engineering Colleges and 19 Polytechnics.

TEQIP Phase- II

- Based on the achievements made during TEQIP Phase-I, TEQIP Phase-II was implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) with the assistance of the World Bank.

- The funding pattern will be 75:25 between the Centre and the participating States and for North Eastern States it will be 90:10.
- The TEQIP-II project is for the duration of 4 years covering about 200 institutions based on competitive funding.

TEQIP phase -III

The Project, Third phase of Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (referred to as TEQIP-III) is fully integrated with the Twelfth Five-year Plan objectives for Technical Education as a key component for improving the quality of Engineering Education in existing institutions with a special consideration for Low Income States and Special Category States (SCS) and support to strengthen few affiliated technical universities to improve their policy, academic and management practices.

The Project will focus on the following objectives:

- Improving quality and equity in engineering institutions in focus states viz. 7 Low Income States (LIS), eight states in the North-East of India, three Hill states viz. Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Andaman and Nicobar Islands (a union territory (UT))
- System-level initiatives to strengthen sector governance and performance which include widening the scope of Affiliating Technical Universities (ATUs) to improve their policy, academic and management practices towards affiliated institutions, and
- Twinning Arrangements to Build Capacity and Improve Performance of institutions and ATUs participating in focus states.

Scope

Only the Government and Government aided AICTE approved Engineering institutions/Engineering faculty/Engineering Teaching Department/Constituent Institutions of Universities/Deemed to be Universities and new centrally funded institutions in SCS will be the part of the project.

National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology

(Source: PIB)

Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development is administering a programme 'National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology' (NMEICT) to leverage the potential of ICT to make the best quality content accessible to all learners in the country, free of cost. **The various initiatives under this programme are as under:**

SWAYAM:

- The 'Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds' (SWAYAM) is an integrated platform for offering **online courses and covering school (9th to 12th) to Post Graduate Level**.
- Till now, many MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) have been offered on SWAYAM.
- The online courses are being used not only by the students but also by the teachers and non-student learners, in the form of **lifelong learning**. It may be accessed on swayam.gov.in NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) has been developing course modules for MOOCs for school education system in 12 subject areas for classes IX-XII.

SWAYAM Prabha:

- SWAYAM Prabha is **an initiative to provide 32 High Quality Educational Channels through DTH (Direct to Home) across the length and breadth of the country on a 24X7 basis**.
- It has **curriculum-based course content** covering diverse disciplines.
- This is primarily **aimed at making quality learning resources accessible to remote areas where internet availability is still a challenge**.

National Digital Library (NDL):

- The National Digital Library of India (NDL) is a project to **develop a framework of virtual repository of learning resources with a single-window search facility**.
- There are more than 3 crore digital resources available through the NDL. The contents cover almost all major domains of education and all major levels of learners including life-long learners.

Spoken Tutorial:

- They are 10-minute long, **audio-video tutorial, on open source software, to improve the employment potential of students**.
- It is **created for self learning, audio dubbed into all 22 languages** and with the availability of online version.
- The languages are C, C++, Java, PHP, Python, PERL, Scilab, OpenFOAM, OpenModelica, DWSIM, LibreOffice and many more. T
- The Spoken Tutorial courses are effectively designed to train a novice user, without the support of a physical teacher.

Free and Open Source Software for Education (FOSSEE):

- FOSSEE is a project **promoting the use of open source software in educational institutions**.
- It does through instructional material, such as spoken tutorials, documentation, such as textbook companions, awareness programmes,

such as conferences, training workshops, and Internships.

- **Textbook Companion (TBC) is a collection of code** for solved examples of standard textbooks.
- TBCs have been created in Scilab and made them available for free download.

Virtual Lab:

- The Virtual Labs Project is **to develop a fully interactive simulation environment to perform experiments, collect data, and answer questions to assess the understanding of the knowledge acquired.**
- In order to achieve the objectives of such an ambitious project, it is essential to develop virtual laboratories with state-of-the-art computer simulation technology to create real world environments and problem handling capabilities.

E-Yantra:

- e-Yantra is a **project for enabling effective education across engineering colleges in India on embedded systems and Robotics.**
- **The training for teachers and students** is imparted through **workshops** where participants are **taught the basics** of embedded systems and programming.

Digital learning Initiatives by CBSE:

- SARANSH is a tool for **comprehensive self review and analysis for CBSE affiliated schools and parents.**
- It enables them to **analyse students' performance** in order to take remedial measures.
- SARANSH **brings schools, teachers and parents closer**, so that they can monitor the progress of students and help them improve their performance.
- It is currently available for Standards IX – XII and provides a comprehensive overview of Standard X performance since 2007 and Standard XII performance since 2009, till the current academic session.

Classroom Centric digital intervention:

- A scheme **Operation Digital Board (ODB) for establishing Smart Classrooms** in classes IX to XII of Government and Government aided schools has been launched on the lines of Operation Blackboard to provide better digital education in schools. It is aimed at improving the quality of education and offer new opportunities and new ways of teaching and learning.

ICT in Education Curricula for students, teachers and teacher educators has been developed at the national level and being implemented across the country.

Promotion of Sanskrit language

Government of India has taken several steps for promotion of Sanskrit language. **The measures taken by the Government for the promotion of Sanskrit are:**

1. Providing financial assistance to **Adarsh Sanskrit Mahavidyalayas / Shodha Sansthan.**
2. Award of merit scholarships to students of **Sanskrit Pathasala** to College level.
3. Financial assistance to NGOs / Higher Educational Institutions of Sanskrit for various Research Projects / Programmes.
4. Retired eminent Sanskrit scholars are engaged under the **Shastra Chudamani scheme** for teaching.
5. Sanskrit is also taught through **Non-formal Sanskrit Education (NFSE) programme**, by setting up Non-Formal Sanskrit learning centres, in reputed institutions like Indian Institutes Technology, Ayurveda institutions, Modern Colleges and Universities.
6. Presidential awards for Sanskrit Language are awarded annually to 16 senior scholars and to 5 young scholars.
7. Financial Assistance for Publication, Reprint of rare Sanskrit books.
8. **Ashtaadashi containing eighteen Projects for sustaining the growth of Sanskrit has been implemented.**

Three Sanskrit institutions

Further, in order to make the masses conversant with the Sanskrit language the three Sanskrit institutions viz.,

1. Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan (RSKS), Delhi.
2. Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha (SLBSRSV), New Delhi and
3. Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha (RSV), Tirupati

Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan has already adopted 5 villages viz.

1. Jubatara(Mohanpur), Tripura.
2. Masot(Pragpur), Himachal Pradesh.
3. Chittebail(Shimoga), Karnataka
4. Adat(Puzhakkal), Kerala and
5. Barai(Huzoor), Madhya Pradesh.

About Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan (RSKS), Delhi

- The Sansthan was established in 15th October, 1970 as an autonomous organisation registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (Act XXI of 1860) for the development and promotion of Sanskrit all over the country.
- It is fully funded by Government of India. It functions as an apex body for propagation and development of Sanskrit and assists the Ministry of Human Resource Development in formulating and implementing various plans and schemes for the development of Sanskrit studies.

- It has assumed the role of a nodal body for the effective implementation of various recommendations made by the Sanskrit Commission set up by the Government of India, Ministry of Education in 1956 to consider the propagation and development of Sanskrit language and education in all its aspects.
- Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan has now been declared as Deemed University on the recommendation of the University Grants Commission by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Higher & Secondary Education, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

About Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha

- It is a Sanskrit language university, located in New Delhi, India.
- It was established on 8 October 1962, and the University Grants Commission, granted the status of a deemed university to the Vidyapeetha in November 1987

About Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha (RSV), Tirupati

- Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, a University established under section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 is a premier institution in the field of higher learning in Sanskrit studies, Traditional Sastras and Pedagogy. It is funded by the Ministry of Human Resource Development through University Grants Commission, New Delhi. The Vidyapeetha has a long history in the service of Sanskrit education.
- The vidyapeetha was established at Tirupati (A.P.) in 1961 by the Government of India on the recommendations of the Sanskrit Commission (1957) as an autonomous body under the name of Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha Tirupati Society. Dr. S.Radhakrishnan, the then Vice President of India laid the foundation stone of the vidyapeetha on 4th January 1962

Bharatmala Pariyojana

Bharatmala Pariyojana is a new **umbrella program for the highways sector that focuses on optimizing efficiency of freight and passenger movement across the country** by bridging critical infrastructure gaps through effective interventions like development of Economic Corridors, Inter Corridors and Feeder Routes, National Corridor Efficiency Improvement, Border and International connectivity roads, Coastal and Port connectivity roads and Green-field expressways.

Major objectives and highlights

- Improvement in efficiency of existing corridors through development of Multimodal Logistics Parks and elimination of choke point
- Enhance focus on improving connectivity in North East and leveraging synergies with Inland Waterways
- Emphasis on use of technology & scientific planning for Project Preparation and Asset Monitoring
- Delegation of powers to expedite project delivery - Phase I to complete by 2022
- Improving connectivity in the North East

Key features of the scheme

- **Improving the quality of roads:** The launch of the scheme has been done for bring a new wave of development in the nation in the form of well-maintained and developed roads. Under this project, the construction of roads, in all parts of the nation will be undertaken.
- **Total road construction:** As per the draft of the scheme, government and the ministry will strive to complete new roads, which will add up to a whopping 34,800 kms.
- **Integrated scheme:** The Bharatmala is the name that is given to the road development and it will include many other related schemes as well. With the completion of all the schemes, the overall success of the scheme will be guaranteed.
- **Total tenure of the program:** The central government has the plans of finishing the scheme within a span of five years. Thus, all is set for finishing the first phase before the end of 2022.
- **Segmentation in phases** - Due to the sheer magnitude and spread of the scheme, it will be divided into seven distinct phases. As of now, the first phase is under construction. Key takeaways from the first phase are;
 - a) A total of around 24,800 kms are being considered in Phase I of Bharatmala.
 - b) In addition, Bharatmala Pariyojana phase -I also includes 10,000 kms of balance road works under NHDP, taking the total to 34,800 kms at an estimated cost of Rs.5,35,000 crore.
 - c) Bharatmala Phase I - is to be implemented over a five years period of i.e. 2017-18 to 2021-22. Components of 1st phase are'
- **Constriction on a daily basis:** To finish the first phase in time, the respective department has made efforts of constructing at least 18 km of path on a daily basis. To beat the clock, continued efforts are being made to raise it to 30 km/day.
- **Different categories of road construction:** It has been highlighted in the official draft of the scheme that to provide better connectivity, the construction of various categories of roads will be undertaken.

- **Multi-source of finding:** One source will not be enough for funding a mammoth project. Thus, the government will have to depend on other sources for generating adequate money to meet the expenses.

Project Category under Bharatmala

- **Economic Corridor:** As per the guidelines of the road construction project, the construction of 9000kms of Economic Corridors will be undertaken by the central government.
- **Feeder Route or Inter Corridor:** The total length of the roads, which fall under the Feeder Route or Inter Corridor category, is a whopping 6000kms.
- **National Corridor Efficiency Improvement:** 5000kms of roads, constructed under the scheme will fall in the category of National Corridor for the better connection between roads.
- **Border Road and International Connectivity:** Connecting the cities and remote areas, which are situated in the border regions, the project has kept provision for constructing 2000kms roads that fall in the Border Road or International Connectivity category.
- **Port Connectivity and Coastal Road:** To connect the areas that are dotted along the shorelines and important ports, the central government has ordered the construction of 2000km of roads.
- **Green Field Expressway:** The main stress will be given on the construction and development of Green Field Expressway **for better management of traffic and freight.**
- **Balance NHDP Works:** Under the last segment, the project will see a construction and maintenance of about 10,000kms of new roads.

Swachhata Pakhwada

(Source: swachhbharatmission.gov.in)

- Swachhata Pakhwada started in April 2016 with the objective of **bringing a fortnight of intense focus on the issues and practices of Swachhata by engaging GOI Ministries/Departments in their jurisdictions.**
- An annual calendar is pre-circulated among the Ministries to help them plan for the Pakhwada activities.
- The Ministries observing Swachhata Pakhwada are monitored closely using **online monitoring system of Swachhata Samiksha** where action plans, images, videos related to Swachhata activities are uploaded and shared.
- After observing Swachhata Pakhwada, Ministries/Departments announce their achievements through a press conference and other communication tools.
- **For the Pakhwada fortnight, observing ministries are considered as Swachhata**

Ministries and are expected to bring qualitative Swachhata improvements in their jurisdictions.

Fifteenth Finance commission

(Source: Finance commission)

The 15th FC was set up under the chairmanship of NK Singh to suggest measures for the five years from 2020 to 2025.

Composition of the Fifteenth Finance Commission

Chairman	Shri N.K. Singh Former Member of Parliament and former Secretary to the Government of India
Member	Shri Ajay Narayan Jha Former Finance Secretary to the Government of India
Member	Dr. Anoop Singh Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University, USA.
Member	Dr. Ashok Lahiri Former Chief Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and former Chairman (Non-executive) Bandhan Bank
Member (Part Time)	Dr. Ramesh Chand Member, NITI Aayog
Secretary	Shri Arvind Mehta

Constitutional provisions related to Finance commission

The article 280 of the constitution of India prescribes that the President of India shall constitute a Finance Commission in every five years to give recommendations to him about the transfer of central revenues to the states and its allocation among them and other matters assigned to it.

What is Finance Commission?

It is a Constitutional body created in every five years to transfer financial resources from the centre to the states.

Areas of recommendations of Finance Commission

- Resource transfer to the states and the criteria for the allocation of such resources among the states, the
- The principle that should guide the allocation of grants in aid to the states out of the center's Consolidated Fund and
- The measures to support the finances of the local bodies are to be suggested by the FC.

Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Fifteenth Finance Commission

The ToR to the Fifteenth Finance Commission has been given under eight guidelines. The first one which

is added below contains the traditional three recommendatory functions of the finance commission. In this:

1. Terms of Reference and the matters that shall be taken into consideration by the Fifteenth Finance Commission in making the recommendations are as under:

- The distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes which are to be divided between them under and the allocation between the States of the respective shares of such proceeds;
 - The principles which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues under Article 275 of the Constitution of India and
 - The measures needed to augment the **Consolidated Fund of a State** to supplement the resources of the Panchayats and Municipalities in the State on the basis of the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State.
2. FC to consider the finances of the centre and states, fiscal consolidation map etc. But under this head, the ToR specifically asks that “The Commission may also examine whether revenue deficit grants be provided at all.”
3. The 15th FC is also asked to consider the six federal finance aspects while making its recommendations. Few of them are:
- The demand on the resources of the Central Government particularly on account of defence, internal security, infrastructure, railways, climate change, commitments towards administration of UTs without legislature, and other committed expenditure and liabilities
 - The demand on the resources of the State Governments, particularly on account of financing socio-economic development and critical infrastructure, assets maintenance expenditure, balanced regional development and impact of the debt and liabilities of their public utilities.
 - **The impact on the fiscal situation of the Union Government of substantially enhanced tax devolution to States** following recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission, coupled with the continuing imperative of the national development programme including New India – 2022.
 - **The impact of the GST, including payment of compensation for possible loss of revenues for 5 years**, and abolition of a number of cesses, the compensation to states etc., on the finances of Centre and States.

- On article 293, that is about the conditions that can be set by the centre on states’ borrowings. Now, besides these aspects, the ToR contains **9 measurable performance-based incentives for states that can be considered by the FC for making a proposal on them**. These nine incentives are attached under item 4 of the ToR.
4. **FC may consider proposing measurable performance-based incentives for States, at the appropriate level of government, in the following areas;**
- Efforts made by the States in expansion and deepening of tax net under GST;
 - Efforts and Progress made in moving towards replacement rate of population growth;
 - Achievements in implementation of flagship schemes of Government of India, disaster resilient infrastructure, sustainable development goals, and quality of expenditure;
 - Progress made in increasing capital expenditure, eliminating losses of power sector
 - Progress made in increasing tax/non-tax revenues, promoting savings by adoption of Direct Benefit Transfers and Public Finance Management System, promoting digital economy and removing layers between the government and the beneficiaries;
 - Progress made in promoting ease of doing business.
 - Provision of grants in aid to local bodies for basic services and other incentives.
 - Control or lack of it in incurring expenditure on populist measures.
 - Progress made in sanitation, solid waste management and open defecation.
5. One significant guideline mentioned in the ToR is that the Commission should follow 2011 census population figures while making its recommendations
6. The Commission may review the present arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives, with reference to the funds constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005
7. The Commission shall indicate the basis on which it has arrived at its findings and make available the State wise estimates of receipts and expenditure.
8. The Commission shall make its report available by 30th October, 2019, covering a period of five years commencing 1st April, 2020.

Indian Human Spaceflight Initiative: Gaganyaan Programme

(Source: PIB)

The Union Cabinet in 2018 approved the Gaganyaan Programme with demonstration of Indian Human Spaceflight capability to low earth orbit for a mission duration ranging from one orbital period to a maximum of seven days. A human rated GSLV Mk-III will be used to carry the orbital module which will have necessary provisions for sustaining a 3-member crew for the duration of the mission. The necessary infrastructure for crew training, realization of flight systems and ground infrastructure will be established to support the Gaganyaan Programme. Two unmanned flights and one manned flight will be undertaken as part of Gaganyaan Programme.

Background

ISRO has completed the development of launch vehicle GSLV Mk-III which has the necessary payload capability to launch a 3-member crew module in low earth orbit. ISRO has also tested the crew escape system which is an essential technology for human space flight. The aerodynamic characterization of crew module has been completed as part of GSLV Mk-III X mission flight. Elements of life support system and Space suit also have been realized and tested. In addition, the orbital & re-entry mission and recovery operations have been flight demonstrated in Space Capsule Re-entry experiment (SRE) mission. ISRO has developed and demonstrated most of the baseline technologies essential for undertaking human spaceflight mission. Globally also, there is a renewed interest in undertaking manned exploration initiatives.

Key Highlights

- The Gaganyaan programme, an indigenous mission that would take Indian astronauts to space,
- Gaganyaan is an Indian crewed orbital spacecraft that is intended to send 3 astronauts to space for a minimum of seven days by 2022, as part of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme.
- The spacecraft, which is being developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), consists of a service module and a crew module, collectively known as the Orbital Module.
- It will be for the first time that India will launch its manned mission to space, making the country fourth in line to have sent a human to space.
- ISRO's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle GSLV Mk III, the three-stage heavy-lift launch vehicle, will be used to launch Gaganyaan as it has the necessary payload capability.
- The launcher uses two S200 solid rocket boosters to provide the huge amount of thrust required for lift off.

Significance

- Gaganyaan Programme will establish a broader framework for collaboration between ISRO,

academia, industry, national agencies and other scientific organizations.

- It This will allow pooling in of diverse technological and industrial capabilities and enable broader participation in research opportunities and technology development benefitting large number of students and researchers.
- The flight system realization will be through Industry.
- It is expected to generate employment and train human resources in advanced technologies.
- It will inspire a large number of young students to take up science and technology careers for national development.
- Gaganyaan Programme is a national effort and will

Impact

- The programme is expected to spur research and development within the country in niche science and technology domains.
- Huge potential for technology spinoffs in areas such as medicine, agriculture, industrial safety, pollution, waste management, water and food resource management etc.
- Human spaceflight programme will provide a unique micro-gravity platform in space for conducting experiments and test bed for future technologies.
- The programme is expected to give impetus to economic activities within the country in terms of employment generation, human resource development and enhanced industrial capabilities.
- Human Spaceflight capability will enable India to participate as a collaborating partner in future Global space exploration initiatives with long term national benefits.

Earth Observation Satellite - RISAT 2B

(Source: ISRO and PIB)

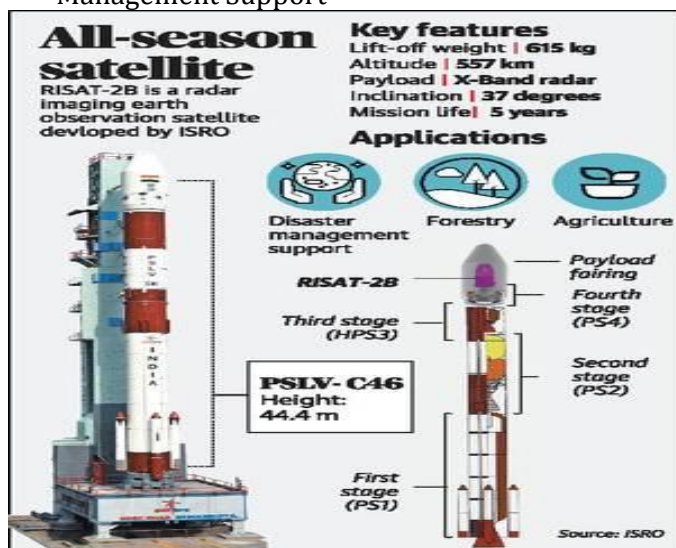
Key highlights about the satellite

- RISAT-2B is an indigenously developed Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) Imaging Satellite operating in the X-band.
- It was launched by **PSLV-C46**
- RISAT-2B is a radar imaging earth observation satellite weighing about 615 kg.
- **Can operate in different modes:** The highly agile satellite is capable of operating in different modes including Very High Resolution RADAR imaging modes of 1m x 0.5m resolution and 0.5m x 0.3m resolution
- In order to increase the number of imaging opportunities, the satellite is placed in an inclined orbit

- **Can be operated in all time:** As, RISAT-2B is a Radar Imaging satellite; it can be operated effectively during day / night / all weather conditions
- **Control of the satellite:** ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) at Bengaluru assumed control of the satellite.

Significance:

- RISAT-2B is an advanced Earth Observation satellite with an advanced technology of 3.6m radial rib antenna
- The Satellite will be used for high resolution spot imaging of locations of interest.
- Apart from this, data from RISAT-2B will also be utilized for agriculture applications and disaster management support.
- Applications of X-Band SAR imagery include Hydrology, Crops, Forestry, Geosciences and Cryosphere.
- During the time of exigencies, very high resolution, day/night/all-weather imaging capabilities of RISAT-2B could be utilized for Disaster Management Support



Technology Development Fund

(Sources:TDF website)

Technology Development Fund (TDF) **has been established to promote self-reliance in Defence Technology as a part of the 'Make in India' initiative.** It is a **programme of MoD (Ministry of Defence) executed by DRDO** meeting the requirements of Tri-Services, Defence Production and DRDO.

The TDF programme covers the following technology development in terms of:

1. Significant up-gradation/improvements/ further developments in the existing products/process/application etc

2. Technology readiness level up-gradation from TRL3 onwards to realization of products as per Tri-Services requirements
3. Development of futuristic technologies/innovative products which can be useful for the defence applications
4. Import substitution of components whose technologies does not exist with the Indian industry.

Eligibility for TDF

- Indian private and public industries, including MSMEs.
- Projects up to INR 10 Crores are eligible for funding; subject to a maximum of 90% of the entire cost of the project. However, 100% of funding may be considered on a case-to-case basis.
- In the event of research organisations or academia being involved in the work, their contribution is limited to 40% of the efforts.

Key features

- The scheme will be limited to development of technologies or prototype of product having potential use for the Services and typical development period of two years.
- The scheme encourages participation of public/private industries especially MSME's as to create an eco-system for enhancing cutting edge technology capability for defence application.
- The scheme will cover funding through provision of grants to industry that may work in collaboration with academia or research institutions to carry out innovation, research and development; such chosen entities will be referred to as Development Agencies (DAs). In cases where academia or research institutions are involved, their work involvement cannot exceed 40% of the total effort required

Technology Development Programme

One of the key objectives of the Department of Science and Technology is to promote technology development in various fields. The Department has been supporting technology development projects under its Technology Development Programme (TDP).

The Programme supports activities aimed at developing and integrating technologies to evolve technology systems both in the advanced/emerging areas and in traditional sectors/areas. Under the Programme, feasibility of fresh ideas/ concepts is assessed for their potential conversion into useful technology/product.

The main objectives of the program include:

- Support R&D for development of innovative technologies in identified areas.
- Promote application of advanced technology for improving the performance and value addition to existing technology.
- Capacity building in the area of technology development in terms of human resource and infra-structure.

The sub schemes of TDP are:

- Advanced Manufacturing Technologies (AMT) aligning to Make in India
- Biomedical Device and Technology Development Program (BDTD) aligning to Swasth Bharat
- Device Development Program (DDP) aligning to Make in India
- Science and Heritage Research Initiative (SHRI)
- Technology Development Program (TDP) aligning to Make in India
- Technology Mission for Indian Railways (TMIR) aligning to Make in India
- Waste Management Technologies (WMT) aligning to Swachh Bharat and Smart City

The mandate of Technology Development Programmes (TDP) is

- To convert proof-of-concepts for development of pre-competitive/commercial technologies/techniques/ processes. The commercialization of these technologies needs further assessment/incubation, which does not fall in the scope of the Technology Development Programme.
- Transfer of technology developed under the project to the industry should ideally be the onus of the host institutions. Proposals of incremental R&D over the existing technologies may be considered for support.
- Theme based concept proposals for proof of feasibility will not be considered under TSDP-DST. Only full fledged complete proposals for development of technology/process/product will be considered under TSDP.
- Projects related to design and development of Software/IT, as required for products and processes, as a part of technology development project shall be considered. Pure software development does not fall in the scope of the programme.
- Technology upgradation of Industry Clusters in select areas should be taken up under TSDP. The proposals where in all/most of the comments are negative will be considered by the Committee, in absentia. The proposal where in the project cost is less than Rs.30:00 lakhs will be considered, in absentia.

The Programme has two major objectives:

- Development and integration of technologies in identified areas.
- Promote application of advanced technology for improving the performance,value addition and exportability of various products.

The specific objectives of the Programme are to:

- develop and integrate technologies following a holistic approach in identified areas
- promote application of modern/advanced technologies to socio-economic problem solving
- encourage developments in application of R&D activities;
- promote activities aimed at improving technology, technique, material, methods and other appropriate activities conducive for development of technology status in identified areas.

Focus of the programme

- Products or technique/process/technology aimed at specific end use
- User (industry, artisans, cooperatives etc.) involvement and association.
- Applied research and development

Core areas for inviting proposals under TDP

Some of the typical areas in which Proposals can be submitted are;

- Glass and Ceramics Technology Up-gradation.,
- Molecular/Biomolecular Electronics/Conducting Polymer and Biosensors,
- Waste (Plastic, Hospital & Electronic)
- Utilization and Management,
- Laser/ Plasmas/ Microwave Technology,
- Development of technology for Alternate Fuels,
- Fuel Conservation, Efficient Utilization of Fuels,
- Innovative Civil Infrastructure Technologies etc.

The above list is not exhaustive and Proposals in other innovative areas are equally welcome if the activity is perceived to be useful by DST for technology advancement in the country and is not being taken up under any other major R&D programmes of the Government of India

National IPR policy

It was approved by the Union cabinet in 2016. The Policy recognises the abundance of creative and innovative energies that flow in India, and the need to tap into and channelize these energies towards a better and brighter future for all.

The National IPR Policy is a vision document that encompasses and brings to a single platform all IPRs. The Policy recognizes that India has a well-established TRIPS-compliant legislative, administrative and judicial framework to safeguard IPRs, which meets its international obligations while utilizing the flexibilities provided in the international regime to address its

developmental concerns. It reiterates India's commitment to the Doha Development Agenda and the TRIPS agreement.

Objectives:

The Policy lays down the following seven objectives:

1. **IPR Awareness:** Outreach and Promotion - To create public awareness about the economic, social and cultural benefits of IPRs among all sections of society.
2. **Generation of IPRs** - To stimulate the generation of IPRs.
3. **Legal and Legislative Framework** - To have strong and effective IPR laws, which balance the interests of rights owners with larger public interest.
4. **Administration and Management** - To modernize and strengthen service-oriented IPR administration.
5. **Commercialization of IPRs** - Get value for IPRs through commercialization.
6. **Enforcement and Adjudication** - To strengthen the enforcement and adjudicatory mechanisms for combating IPR infringements.
7. **Human Capital Development** - To strengthen and expand human resources, institutions and capacities for teaching, training, research and skill building in IPRs.

These objectives are sought to be achieved through detailed action points. The action by different Ministries/ Departments shall be monitored by DIPP which shall be the nodal department to coordinate, guide and oversee implementation and future development of IPRs in India.

Salient Features:

1. **Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM):** A Cell CIPAM shall be created as a professional body under aegis of DIPP (now Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade) to address the 7 identified objectives of the Policy. It will coordinate with agencies at State level and with the various Ministries/ Departments of the Union Government. The data generated at CIPAM shall serve as a valuable resource for future policy.
2. **Awareness Campaign:** To be launched in schools, institutions of higher education like engineering colleges and law schools, centres of skill development, industry clusters etc, it aims to foster an IP culture in the country by creating awareness about the economic, social and cultural benefits of IPRs among all sections and enabling people to realize the value of their IPs as also respect for other IPRs.
3. **IP Cells:** IP cells shall be created in key Ministries/ Departments of the Govt of India, which are vital

the field of IPRs, as well as in State Governments, Industry associations and clusters and major academic institutions. CIPAM shall coordinate with the Cells.

4. **Generation, registration and commercialization:** The Policy aims to encourage creativity and innovation, leading to generation of IPs and their protection through IPRs. Registration of Geographical Indications (GIs) shall be encouraged through support institutions.
5. **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL):** TKDL's ambit is to be expanded to include other fields besides Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani & Siddha. The possibility of using TKDL for furthering R&D by public research institutions and private sector will be explored.
6. The Policy recognizes the importance of effective **coordination between Patent office and National Biodiversity Authority** for speeding up the disposal of patent applications using biological resources and associated TK.
7. **Cadre Management in IP Offices:** The Policy recognizes the crucial role of a motivated work force in productivity enhancements. The organizational and cadre structure of the Indian IP Offices shall be studied and reviewed with a view to enhance efficiency and productivity.
8. **Access to Medicines:** Access to affordable medicines and other healthcare solutions is becoming a challenge for all countries. India too faces a growing challenge on this count. The Policy recognises this and aims to enhance this by (a) **encouraging cross-sector partnerships** between public sector, private sector, universities and NGOs; (b) **promoting novel licensing models**, and (c) **developing novel technology platforms**.
9. **Piracy/ Counterfeiting:** Offline and online piracy is a serious concern and needs to be combated through public awareness as also legal and enforcement mechanisms.
10. **Assistance to smaller firms:** Smaller firms need assistance for protection of their IPRs internationally. Schemes such as DeitY's Support for International Patent Protection in Electronics and IT (SIP-EIT) are to be enhanced.
11. **Judicial Awareness & Resolution of IP disputes:** Since IPRs are a specialised discipline, awareness amongst the judiciary is crucial since judicial precedents set the tone of the country's IP regime. For this, it is important that IP modules for judges be formulated, including regular IP workshops / colloquia at the judicial academies. Commercial Courts set up at appropriate levels will be responsible for adjudicating IP disputes. Resolution of IP cases through Alternate Dispute Resolution methods shall reduce burden on judiciary and provide speed and inexpensive resolution of disputes. Mediation and conciliation

centres need strengthening, and ADR capabilities and skills in the field of IP developed.

12. **Review: A detailed review of IPR Policy shall be undertaken every five years.** Continuous and regular Review will be done by a Committee to be constituted for this purpose under the Secretary, DIPPI.

National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations - NIDHI

NIDHI, an umbrella program was pioneered by the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, for nurturing ideas and innovations (knowledge-based and technology-driven) into successful startups.

Objectives

- To take forward student innovations in IEDC / NewGen IEDC programme to commercialization stage.
- To promote student startups.
- To accelerate the journey of idea to prototype by providing initial funding assistance.

Components of NIDHI

There are 8 components of NIDHI that support each stage of a budding startup from idea to market. They are as follows

1. NIDHI GCC - Grand Challenges and Competitions for scouting innovations

Objectives

- To find & nurture new and innovative solutions for major challenges being faced by the society that are viable and sustainable.
- To pickup ideas from untapped sources and convert them into startups.
- To generate better awareness about entrepreneurship amongst India's masses and reach out to aspiring and existing entrepreneurs through active media outreach.
- To expand the pipeline of potential incubatees for all TBIs
- To provide structured mentoring, guidance, prototyping grants, and seed-funding for ideas applying for such programs.
- To build a vibrant startup ecosystem, by establishing a network between academia, financial institutions, industries and other institutions.

2. NIDHI - PRomoting and accelerating Young and Aspiring Innovators and Startups (NIDHI-PRAYAS) - Support from Idea to Prototype Targets and outcome

- The program would target to facilitate and enable minimum 100 innovators annually across the country in translating their ideas into prototype through funding support to maximum 10 PRAYAS Centres (PC) in the country. It aims to support innovators to build prototypes of their ideas by providing a grant up to Rs.10 lakhs and an access to Fabrication Laboratory (Fab Lab). PRAYAS was launched on 2nd September, 2016.

3. NIDHI-Entrepreneur In Residence (NIDHI-EIR)- Support system to reduce risk

Objectives

- To encourage graduating student to take to entrepreneurship by providing support as a fellowship.
- To provide a prestigious forum for deserving and budding entrepreneurs to pursue their ventures without any additional risks involved in technology based businesses.
- To create, nurture and strengthen a pipeline of entrepreneurs for incubators.
- To make pursuing entrepreneurship related to a technology business idea more attractive among options available career options.
- To enable creation of new start - ups by entrepreneurs and significant progress towards raising funding or investment.

4. Startup-NIDHI

Through Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centres (IEDCs) in academic institutions; encouraging Students to promote start-ups

Objectives

- To take forward student innovations in IEDC /NewGen IEDC programme to commercialization stage
- To promote student startups
- To accelerate the journey of idea to prototype by providing initial funding assistance

5. NIDHI-Technology Business Incubator(TBI)- Converting Innovations to start-ups

Objectives

- To create jobs, wealth and businesses aligning with national priorities.
- To promote new technology/knowledge/innovation based startups.
- To provide a platform for speedy commercialization of technologies developed by the host institution or by any academic/technical/R&D institution or by an individual.
- To build a vibrant startup ecosystem, by establishing a network between academia,

financial institutions, industries and other institutions.

- To provide cost effective, value added services to startups like mentoring, legal, financial, technical, intellectual property related services.

6. NIDHI-Accelerator-Fast tracking a start-up through focused intervention

Objectives

- To fast track the growth of potential start ups through rigorous mentoring and networking support in a short span through existing TBIs
- To attract subject matter experts, mentors, and angel investors get associated with TBIs through the structured accelerator programs
- To build a vibrant startup ecosystem, by establishing a network between academia, financial institutions, industries and other institutions.
- To act as a hub for several incubators in the region, so that high-potential startups can be fast-tracked for increased exposure and validation
- Accelerators should employ a “fail fast” mentality: ideas or prototypes that are not getting traction should be abandoned (or modified) quickly, allowing founders to redeploy resources to other projects or even new companies at a rapid pace.

7. NIDHI-Seed Support System (NIDHI-SSS)-Providing early stage investment

Objective

- To ensure timely availability of the seed support to the deserving incubatee startups within an incubator, thereby enabling them to take their venture to next level and facilitate towards their success in the market place. The scheme also enables the STEP/TBI to widen their pipeline of startups and also share the success of their startups which would also result in ensuring their long term operational sustainability.

8. NIDHI Centres of Excellence (NIDHI-CoE)-A World class facility to help startups go global

Objectives

- To promote new technology/knowledge/innovation based impact making startups.
- To provide cost effective, value added services to startups like mentoring, legal, financial, technical, intellectual property related services.

- To scale up existing/new activities targeted at seeding and supporting startups.
- To provide a platform for speedy commercialization of technologies developed by the host institution or by any academic/technical/R&D institution or by an individual.
- To build a vibrant startup ecosystem, by establishing a network between academia, financial institutions, industries and other institutions.
- To create jobs, wealth and business in alignment with national priorities.

Invest India programme

(Source: Invest India website)

Invest India is the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency of India and act as the first point of reference for investors in India.

Invest India was formed in 2009 under the Companies Act 1956 for **promotion of foreign investment** with 49% equity of the then Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry and 51% shareholding by FICCI.

The projects which are being handled by Invest India, inter-alia, include the following:

- **Proactive Investor Targeting:** Invest India identifies target companies across focus sectors from target markets looking to initiate investment into India or further expansion in India.
- **Handholding support:** The provision of **high quality services to support investors** throughout the investment life cycle is extremely important and Invest India creates vital differentiation and an invaluable service offering of guidance, handholding, problem solving and facilitation for investors.
- **Bilateral CEO Forums:** Government of India has institutionalized bilateral CEOs forums with various countries to identify new avenues for cooperation and take initiatives to facilitate business links between countries. Invest India takes up the responsibility of **acting as the nodal point for investment related issues/ recommendations** and help action investment specific resolutions raised at the CEOs Forums.
- **Country – Sector Outreach:** Invest India proactively contributes to national and regional policy development by planning Country/Sector interactions.
- **Strategic Investment Research Unit:** It shapes India's investment landscape and **drives a step change in the quality and quantity of FDI**. The Strategic Investment Research unit not only act as a strong pillar for the core functions of the IPA, like

investor targeting and facilitation, but also assist in preparing investment related briefings.

- **Harnessing Information & Communication Technology for FDI:** Invest India scales up use of technology for investment targeting and facilitation. **Using Information and Communication Technology**, IPAs are putting in place increasingly sophisticated investor inquiry tracking tools to handle and process such inquiries.
- **Working with State Investment Promotion Agencies:** Invest India plays a central role in ensuring that FDI is on the agenda of all State agencies, State Governments and stakeholders, highlighting the substantial economic and social benefits which can be accrued locally from FDI.
- **Startups:** Startup India is a flagship initiative of the Government of India, **intended to build a strong eco-system for nurturing innovation and Startups in the country** that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade with the help of Invest India **aims to empower Startups to grow through innovation and design through this initiative.**
- **Accelerating Growth of New India's Innovations (AGNi):** It aims to support the ongoing efforts to boost the innovation ecosystem in the country by connecting innovators across industry, individuals and the grassroots to the market and helping commercialise their innovative solutions. Invest India provides a platform for innovators to bring their market ready products and solutions to industry thereby helping propel India into a new era of inclusive economic growth.
- **India Investment Grid:** India Investment Grid (IIG) is an online platform to showcase investment opportunities in India to global investors. The platform is looked after by Invest India.

The efforts of Invest India and measures taken by the Government on FDI policy liberalization along with improvement in ease of doing business climate have resulted in unprecedented growth of total FDI inflows. India has recorded USD 64.38 billion FDI inflow in the year 2018-19 which is an increase of 78.6% over financial year 2013-14 when total FDI inflow was USD 36.05 billion.

Review by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade conducts regular review of the performance of Invest India. Further, the Board of Directors, under the chairmanship of Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, including nominees from Government of India, FICCI, CII and NASSCOM

manages and oversee the overall operations, direction and strategy of the company.

Draft National e-commerce policy

In India, as across the globe, the Electronic Commerce market has been witnessing consistent growth in recent years. The Indian B2C e-commerce market was valued at USD 38.5 billion in 2017 and is estimated to rise to USD 200 billion in 2026, 1 while B2B e-commerce was estimated to be around USD 300 billion. Despite the high rate of growth of e-commerce in India, the sector is still at a nascent stage and according to some estimates, it is about 3 percent of the retail market worth USD 860 billion, excluding travel and tourism.

Electronic commerce and data are emerging as key enablers and critical determinants of India's growth and economic development. In order to enhance the capabilities and realise the potential of the electronic commerce sector, it is imperative that India develops robust administrative, regulatory and legal mechanisms. The National e-Commerce Policy lays down strategies to address issues pertinent to the sector.

Aim

The National e-Commerce Policy aims to create a framework for achieving holistic growth of the e-commerce sector along with existing policies of Make in India and Digital India.

Scope and Objectives

The National e-Commerce Policy addresses six broad issues of the e-commerce ecosystem viz.

1. Data
2. Infrastructure development
3. e-commerce marketplaces
4. Regulatory issues
5. Stimulating domestic digital economy; and
6. Export promotion through e-commerce.

It identifies critical aspects of each issue and lays out strategies to achieve the Government's vision.

The identification of aspects and strategies takes into account the needs and expectations of all stakeholders and accords the interests of startups, small manufacturing, trading and service enterprises a high consideration.

Key highlights of the policy

- The National e-Commerce Policy lays down strategies to address issues pertinent to the sector. Consumer protection, data privacy and maintenance of a level-playing field are some of the crucial issues.

- The Policy takes into account the interests of all stakeholders, be they investors, manufacturers, MSMEs, traders,retailers, startups and consumers.
- The Policy takes into account the interests of all stakeholders, be they investors, manufacturers, MSMEs, traders,retailers, startups and consumers. The strategies envisages should provide a basis for unlocking productivity, generating new-age jobs, protecting critical personal information, enhancing consumer awareness and facilitating onboarding of domestic producers, manufacturers, traders and retailers.
- The policy mentions that the unprecedented explosion in the volume of data creates as much a threat to its misuse as it creates opportunities for utilization for policy making.
- The National e-Commerce Policy also aims to streamline protection of personal data and empower the users/consumers to have control over the data they generate and own.
- **Regulation of cross border data flow:** In light of the increasing importance of data protection and privacy, the National e-Commerce Policy ("Policy") aims to regulate cross-border data flow, while enabling sharing of anonymised community data (data collected by IoT devices installed in public spaces like traffic signals or automated entry gates).
- **With an aim to develop capacities of the domestic industry, the Policy takes forward the following core components of the Digital India initiative:**
 - a) The development of secure and stable digital infrastructure
 - b) Delivering Government services digitally; and
 - c) Universal digital literacy
- **Development of data-storage facilities/infrastructure is an important vision of the Policy** wherein data centres, server farms, towers, tower stations, equipment, optical wires, signal transceivers, antennae will be granted 'infrastructure status' to facilitate last mile connectivity across urban and rural India.
- The Policy provides for integrating Customs, RBI and India Post systems to improve tracking of imports through e-Commerce
- Domestic alternatives of foreign-based cloud services and email facilities are also promoted under the Policy.
- Online sale of counterfeits is a worrisome trend. Anti-counterfeiting measures have been prescribed under the Policy.
- It also mentions that e-Commerce entities are required to publicly share all relevant details of sellers who make their products available on websites/platforms of these entities.

- Mechanisms to enable trademark owners (and licensees) to be informed about any possible counterfeit product being sold on a platform have been included in the Policy.
- Transparency, consumer-oriented strategies and prevention of sale of prohibited items (as prescribed by DGFT) have been addressed under the Policy.
- The Policy recognizes the importance of enacting regulations in the areas of taxation, law, small enterprises and start-ups, consumer protection, payment systems, content liability and environment in harmony with the necessities and interests of the digital ecosystem
- The National e-Commerce Policy is aimed to address concerns which go beyond the sale and purchase of products by electronic means.

Free Trade and Warehousing Zones(FTWZ)

Objective

To create trade-related infrastructure to facilitate the import and export of goods and services with freedom to carry out trade transactions in free currency.

Key features

- The scheme envisages creation of world-class infrastructure for warehousing of various products, state-of-the-art equipment, transportation and handling facilities, commercial office-space, water, power, communications and connectivity, with one-stop clearance of import and export formality, to support the integrated Zones as 'international trading hubs'.
- These Zones would be established in areas proximate to seaports, airports or dry ports so as to offer easy access by rail and road.
- The scheme envisages duty free import of all goods (except prohibited items, arms and ammunitions, hazardous wastes and SCOMET items) for ware housing. As far as bond towards customs duty on import is concerned, the units would be subject to similar provisions as are applicable to units in SEZs.
- Packing or re-packing without processing, and labeling as per customer or marketing requirements could be undertaken within the FTWZ
- The maximum period that goods shall be permitted to be warehoused within the FTWZ will be two years, after which they shall necessarily have to be re-exported or sold in the DTA(Domestic Tariff Area).
- The Free Trade & Warehousing Zones (FTWZ) shall be a special category of Special Economic Zones with a focus on trading and warehousing.

Free Trade and Warehousing Zones SEZs in India

There are 8 approved Free Trade and Warehousing Zones (FTWZs) in India. Out of eight FTWZs, four have been notified. Out of 4 notified FTWZs, 3 are operational.

UNNATI - ISRO

Background

India announced a capacity building programme UNNATI (UNISpace Nanosatellite Assembly & Training by ISRO) on Nanosatellites development through a combination of theoretical coursework and hands-on training on Assembly, Integration and Testing (AIT) in June 2018(formally inaugurated in 2019) to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first United nation conference UNISPACE+50.

Key highlights

• Objectives

The programme aims at capacity building in satellite technology for participants from countries interested in developing space programme by providing hands-on experience in building and testing of nano satellites. **The primary objectives of the programme are:**

1. To offer a simplified and increased exposure to satellite fabrication technologies, as part of the UNISPACE initiative
2. To provide theoretical course on satellite technology
3. To provide intensive course on nano satellite realization, covering mission aspects, design, fabrication, assembly, integration & testing
4. To provide hands-on training to assemble, integrate and test a low cost modular nano satellite

- U R Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) being the lead centre of ISRO for satellite building has designed the basic structure of this programme with equal emphasis on theoretical and practical exposure.

• Who Should Attend

1. **The course is aimed at Engineering/ Science graduates or Postgraduates** who have an aptitude to learn about space technology, design of circuits for various space systems and management of space systems.
2. Each participating country shall nominate a team of 2 members consisting of one Mechanical Engineer and one Electrical/Electronics Engineer.
3. In case a desired engineering candidate is not available, the alternate nominee must have physics background

• Three modules under the programme:

1. **Module 1:** Basics of satellite technology and its applications (Duration: 2 weeks) The participants will be introduced to the topics of the satellite technology
2. **Module 2:** Nano satellite missions (Duration: 2 weeks) Nano satellite and laws governing their impact on space debris
3. **Module 3:** Hands-on training on nano satellite assembly, integration and testing (Duration: 4 weeks)

About United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)

- UNOOSA works to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses and exploration of space.
- Towards the UNISPACE initiative, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) is working on a system of "UN led international constellation of satellites" for Disaster risk reduction, GNSS, Telecommunication and other initiatives focused at developing countries.
- It also promotes the utilization of space science and technology for sustainable economic and social development.
- The Office assists any United Nations Member State to establish legal and regulatory frameworks to govern space activities.
- It strengthens the capacity of developing countries to use space science technology and applications for development by facilitating the integration of space capabilities into national developmental programmes.
- Through the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, UNOOSA conducts international workshops, training courses and pilot projects on topics that include remote sensing, satellite navigation, satellite meteorology, tele-education and basic space sciences for the benefit of developing nations.
- It also administers the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER).
- **Together with all stakeholders, the shared goal for UNISPACE+50 is to build a comprehensive Space 2030 agenda** that will integrate space activities into sustainable and long-term developmental goals, based on the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space

Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries - Scheme on Blue Revolution

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries has restructured the scheme by merging all the

ongoing schemes under an umbrella of Blue Revolution. The restructured scheme provides focused development and management of fisheries, covering inland fisheries, aquaculture, marine fisheries including deep sea fishing, mariculture and all activities undertaken by the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB).

Vision

Creating an enabling environment for integrated development of the full potential of fisheries of the country, along with substantially improvement in the income status of fishers and fish farmers keeping in view the sustainability, bio-security and environmental concerns.

Objectives

- To fully tap the total fish potential of the country both in the inland and the marine sector and **triple the production by 2020.**
- **To transform the fisheries sector as a modern industry** with special focus on new technologies and processes
- **To double the income of the fishers and fish farmers** with special focus on increasing productivity and better marketing postharvest infrastructure including e-commerce and other technologies and global best innovations
- To ensure **inclusive participation of the fishers and fish farmers** in the income enhancement
- To triple the export earnings by 2020 with focus on benefits flow to the fishers and fish farmers including through institutional mechanisms in the cooperative, producer companies and other structures
- **To enhance food and nutritional security of the country**

Six components of the scheme

The scheme has the following six broad components:

1. National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) and its activities.
2. Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture.
3. Development of Marine Fisheries, Infrastructure and Post Harvest Operations.
4. Strengthening of Database & Geographical Information System of the Fisheries Sector.
5. Institutional Arrangement for Fisheries Sector and
6. Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) and other need-based Interventions.
7. National Scheme of Welfare of Fishermen

Implementation

The scheme would be implemented through the following agencies:

- Central Government, Central Government Institutes/Agencies, NFDB, ICAR Institutes etc.
- State Governments and Union Territories

- State Government Agencies, Organisations, Corporations, Federations, Boards, Panchayats and Local Urban Bodies
- Fishers Cooperatives/Registered Fishers Bodies
- Individual beneficiaries/fishers, Entrepreneurs, Scheduled Castes(SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) Groups, Women and their Co-operatives, SHG's and Fish Farmers and miscellaneous Fishermen Bodies

FSSAI

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has been established under Food Safety and Standards , 2006 which consolidates various acts & orders that have hitherto handled food related issues in various Ministries and Departments. FSSAI has been created for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure the availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.

The Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006 also aims to establish a single reference point for all matters relating to food safety and standards, by moving from multi- level, multi- departmental control to a single line of command. To this effect, the Act establishes an independent statutory Authority – the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India with head office at Delhi. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the State Food Safety Authorities shall enforce various provisions of the Act.

Establishment of the Authority

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is the Administrative Ministry for the implementation of FSSAI. The Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) are appointed by the Government of India. The Chairperson is in the rank of Secretary to Government of India.

FSSAI has been mandated by the FSS Act, 2006 for performing the following functions:

- **Framing of Regulations** to lay down the Standards and guidelines in relation to articles of food and specifying appropriate system of enforcing various standards thus notified.
- **Laying down mechanisms** and guidelines for accreditation of certification bodies engaged in certification of food safety management system for food businesses.
- **Laying down procedure and guidelines for accreditation of laboratories** and notification of the accredited laboratories.
- **To provide scientific advice and technical support** to Central Government and State Governments in the matters of framing the policy

and rules in areas which have a direct or indirect bearing of food safety and nutrition.

- **Collect and collate data regarding food consumption**, incidence and prevalence of biological risk, contaminants in food, residues of various, contaminants in foods products, identification of emerging risks and introduction of rapid alert system.
- **Creating an information network across the country** so that the public, consumers, Panchayats etc receive rapid, reliable and objective information about food safety and issues of concern.
- **Provide training programmes** for persons who are involved or intend to get involved in food businesses.
- Contribute to the **development of international technical standards for food**, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards.
- Promote general **awareness** about food safety and food standards.

Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015

The Act seeks to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children as ratified by India in 1992. It specifies procedural safeguards in cases of children in conflict with the law. It seeks to address challenges in the existing Act such as delays in adoption processes, high pendency of cases, accountability of institutions, etc. The Act further seeks to address children in the 16-18 age group, in conflict with the law, as an increased incidence of crimes committed by them have been reported over the past few years.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 has come into force from January 2016 and repeals the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000.

Key provisions of the act

- **Change in nomenclature** from 'juvenile' to 'child' or 'child in conflict with law', across the Act to remove the negative connotations associated with the word "juvenile"
- **New definitions**: Several new definitions are included in it such as orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children; and petty, serious and heinous offences committed by children;
- **Clarity in powers, functions and responsibilities** of Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) and Child Welfare Committee (CWC); clear timelines for inquiry by Juvenile Justice Board (JJB).
- The Act mandates **setting up Juvenile Justice Boards and Child Welfare Committees** in every

district. Both must have at least one woman member each.

- **Offences and safety of children**: It mentions Special provisions for heinous offences committed by children above the age of sixteen years -
 1. Special provisions have been made to tackle child offenders committing heinous offences in the age group of 16-18 years.
 2. The Juvenile Justice Board is given the option to transfer cases of heinous offences by such children to a Children's Court (Court of Session) after conducting preliminary assessment.
 3. The provisions provide for placing children in a 'place of safety' both during and after the trial till they attain the age of 21 years after which an evaluation of the child shall be conducted by the Children's Court. After the evaluation, the child is either released on probation and if the child is not reformed then the child will be sent to a jail for remaining term.
 4. The law will act as a deterrent for child offenders committing heinous offences such as rape and murder and will protect the rights of victim.
- **Separate new chapter on Adoption to streamline adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children under the act**:
 1. To streamline adoption procedures for orphan, abandoned and surrendered children, the existing **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is given the status of a statutory body** to enable it to perform its function more effectively.
 2. Separate chapter on Adoption provides for detailed provisions relating to adoption and punishments for not complying with the laid down procedure.
 3. Processes have been streamlined with timelines for both in-country and inter-country adoption including declaring a child legally free for adoption.
 4. As per the provisions, a single or divorced person can also adopt, but a single male cannot adopt a girl child.
- **Inclusion of new offences committed against children** - Several new offences committed against children, which are so far not adequately covered under any other law, are included in the Act. **These include**:
 1. Sale and procurement of children for any purpose including illegal adoption.
 2. Corporal punishment in child care institutions.
 3. Use of child by militant groups,
 4. offences against disabled children and kidnapping and abduction of children.

- **Penalties for cruelty against a child**, offering a narcotic substance to a child, and abduction or selling a child have been prescribed.
 1. The act mentions that Any official, who does not report an abandoned or orphaned child within 24 hours, is liable to imprisonment up to six months or a fine of Rs 10,000 or both.
 2. The penalty for non-registration of child care institutions is imprisonment up to one year or a fine of one lakh rupees, or both.
 3. The penalty for giving a child intoxicating liquor, narcotic or psychotropic substances is imprisonment up to seven years or a fine of one lakh rupees, or both.
- **Mandatory registration of Child Care Institutions:** All child care institutions, whether run by State Government or by voluntary or non-governmental organisations, which are meant, either wholly or partially for housing children, regardless of whether they receive grants from the Government, are to be mandatorily registered under the Act within 6 months from the date of commencement of the Act. Stringent penalty is provided in the law in case of non-compliance.
- **Rehabilitation and social reintegration measures:**
 1. **Under the act** several rehabilitation and social reintegration measures have been provided for children in conflict with law and those in need of care and protection.
 2. Under the institutional care, children are provided with various services including education, health, nutrition, de-addiction, treatment of diseases, vocational training, skill development, life skill education, counselling, etc to help them assume a constructive role in the society.
 3. The variety of non-institutional options include: sponsorship and foster care including group foster care for placing children in a family environment which is other than child's biological family, which is to be selected, qualified, approved and supervised for providing care to children.

Key features of the Bill:

- **The definition of transgender person:**
The proposed bill defines a transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth.
It includes trans-men and trans-women, persons with intersex variations, gender-queers, and persons with socio-cultural identities, such as kinnar and hijra.
Intersex variations is defined to mean a person who at birth shows variation in his or her primary sexual characteristics, external genitalia, chromosomes, or hormones from the normative standard of male or female body.
- **Prohibition against discrimination:**
The proposed bill prohibits the discrimination against a transgender person, including denial of service or unfair treatment in relation to:
 1. Education
 2. Employment
 3. Healthcare
 4. Access to, or enjoyment of goods, facilities, opportunities available to the public
 5. Right to movement
 6. Right to reside, rent, or otherwise occupy property
 7. Opportunity to hold public or private office; and
 8. Access to a government or private establishment in whose care or custody a transgender person is.
- **Right of residence to every transgender person :** The bill mentions that every transgender person shall have a right to reside and be included in his household. If the immediate family is unable to care for the transgender person, the person may be placed in a rehabilitation centre, on the orders of a competent court.
- **No discrimination in Employment:** it also states that no government or private entity can discriminate against a transgender person in employment matters, including recruitment, and promotion. Every establishment is required to designate a person to be a complaint officer to deal with complaints in relation to the Act.
- **Inclusive Education:** Educational institutions funded or recognised by the relevant government shall provide inclusive education, sports and recreational facilities for transgender persons, without discrimination.
- **Health care facilities by the government:** The government must take steps to provide health facilities to transgender persons including separate HIV surveillance centres, and sex reassignment surgeries. The government shall review medical

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2019

(Sources: PRS India)

Aim of the bill:

Mitigating the stigma, discrimination and abuse against marginalized Transgender population and bring them into the mainstream of society.

curriculum to address health issues of transgender persons, and provide comprehensive medical insurance schemes for them.

• **Certificate of identity for a transgender person:**

A transgender person may make an application to the District Magistrate for a certificate of identity, indicating the gender as 'transgender'. A revised certificate may be obtained only if the individual undergoes surgery to change their gender either as a male or a female.

- **Welfare measures by the government:** The Bill states that the relevant government will take measures to ensure the full inclusion and participation of transgender persons in society. It must also take steps for their rescue and rehabilitation, vocational training and self-employment, create schemes that are transgender sensitive, and promote their participation in cultural activities.

- **Offences and penalties:** The Bill mentions the following offences against transgender persons:

1. Forced or bonded labour (excluding compulsory government service for public purposes)
2. Denial of use of public places
3. Removal from household, and village.
4. Physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or economic abuse.

Penalties for these offences vary between six months and two years, and a fine.

- **National Council for Transgender persons (NCT):** The Council will advise the central government as well as monitor the impact of policies, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons. It will also redress the grievances of transgender persons. **The NCT will consist of:**

1. Union Minister for Social Justice (Chairperson).
2. Minister of State for Social Justice (Vice-Chairperson)
3. Secretary of the Ministry of Social Justice
4. One representative from ministries including Health, Home Affairs, and Human Resources Development. Other members include representatives of the NITI Aayog, and the National Human Rights Commission. State governments will also be represented.
5. The Council will also consist of **five members from the transgender community** and five experts from non-governmental organisations.

Objective

To provide senior citizens, **belonging to BPL category** and suffering from age related disabilities/ infirmities, with such physical aids and assisted living devices which can restore near normalcy in their bodily functions.

Implemented by

The Scheme is being implemented through 'Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO)', (a Public Sector Undertaking under this Ministry) as the sole implementing Agency

Key features

- Under the Scheme, aids & assisted living devices viz. walking sticks, elbow crutches, walkers/ crutches, tripods/ quad pods, hearing aids, wheelchairs, artificial dentures and spectacles are distributed free of cost to the eligible senior citizens beneficiaries.
- This is a Central Sector Scheme, fully funded by the Central Government.
- The Scheme is entirely funded from the Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund (SCWF), established vide Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund Rules, 2016 (The expenditure for implementation of the scheme will be met from the "Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund")
- Under the scheme the beneficiaries in each district are identified by a team of doctors/technicians/other professionals to assess their needs and to prescribe the requisite Assisted Living Devices in the Assessment Camps organized by ALIMCO in collaboration with the respective District Administration.
- The State Government/UT Administration/District Level Committee can also utilize the data of BPL beneficiaries receiving Old Age Pension under the NSAP or any other Scheme of the State/UT for identification of senior citizens belonging to BPL category.
- The devices are then distributed to the identified beneficiaries in the camp mode.
- Further, regular communications are made from this Ministry to respective States/UTs Governments for extending cooperation to ALIMCO in organizing these Camps.
- As far as possible, 30% of the beneficiaries in each district shall be women.
- **Eligibility:** Senior Citizens, belonging to BPL category and suffering from any of the age related disability/infirmity viz. Low vision, Hearing impairment, Loss of teeth and Locomotor disability will be provided with such assisted-living devices which can restore near normalcy in their bodily functions, overcoming the disability/infirmity manifested. The Scheme is expected to benefit all Senior Citizens across the country

National Resource Management component under MGNREGS

Background

In 2014, the amendment to MGNREGA Schedule-I was done which mandates that at least 60% expenditure will be on agriculture and allied activities was done. Consequently, a list of permissible works under the Act now has nearly 75% activities that directly improve the water security and water conservation efforts.

Paragraph 1B of amended Schedule-1 of MGNREG Act provides that the focus of the Scheme shall be on the following works and the order of priority shall be determined by each Gram Panchayat after the meeting of Gram Sabha. The works included in Para 1B Schedule I of MGNREG Act are:

1. Water conservation and water harvesting
2. Watershed management
3. Drought proofing including afforestation and tree plantation
4. Irrigation canals, including micro and macro irrigation works
5. Provision of irrigation facility, dug out farm pond, Horticulture, Plantation, farm bund and land development on land owned by households specified in paragraph 1C of Schedule 1 of the Act.
6. Renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks
7. Land development
8. Flood control and protection work including drainage in waterlogged areas
9. Deepening and repairing of flood channels, construction of stormwater
10. Rural connectivity to provide all weather access, including culverts and roads within a village, wherever necessary.
11. Drains for coastal protection; fisheries related works, such as fisheries in seasonal water bodies on public land; works in coastal areas, such as fish drying yards, belt vegetation. .
12. Rural drinking water related works, such as soak pits, recharge pits
13. Rural sanitation related works
14. Solid and liquid waste management
15. Construction of Anganwadi centers and play fields
16. Any other permissible works which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government (Mahatma Gandhi NREGA 2005).

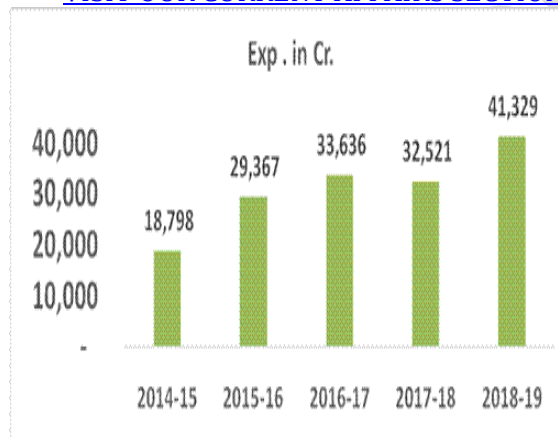
Key Highlights

- Approximately 60% of the resources are spent on Natural Resource Management (NRM).
- The **NRM works are focused on** ensuring higher incomes to farmers by improving both the area under cultivation and yield of crops. This is done by

improving the productivity of land and increasing the **water availability**.

- The major works taken up under NRM include check dam, ponds, renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, embankment, field bunds, field channels, plantations, contour trenches etc.
- The expenditure on NRM work expenditure has been rising in a sustained manner over the last five years. The NRM Expenditure under MGNREGS over the 5 years (FY 2014-2019) is as under:

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- The MGNREGA has been working in convergence with various States in implementing schemes tailor made for the area. The NRM works comprise of a complete tool kit to tackle the problem of water conservation. The list of activities are so designed that it suits the varying requirements of the States according to their topography.
- The funds of MGNREGA, dovetailed with State funds have led to the following very successful state level schemes:

SL.No	SCHEME NAME	STATE
1.	Mukhyamantri Jal Swavalamban Abhiyan	Rajasthan
2.	Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan	Maharashtra
3.	Dobha or Farm Ponds construction	Jharkhand
4.	Neeru Chettu	Andhra Pradesh
5.	Kapil Dhara	Madhya Pradesh
6.	Bore Well Recharge	Karnataka
7.	Usar Mukti	West Bengal

- **The Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi in January, 2018 conducted a national evaluation of Natural Resource Management (NRM) works under MGNREGS and its impact on sustainable livelihoods.** While carrying out national evaluation, the study found increase in

productivity, incomes fodder availability, acreage, and even rise in water table on account of the NRM works.

QS World University Rankings-2020

(Sources: Economic times and The Hindu)

The QS global rankings 2020, which was released in London, has 50 new entrants globally and India-based O P Jindal Global University (JGU), established in 2009, has become the youngest university to break into top 1,000 in the prestigious rankings.

Key highlights

- **Three Indian institutes** - IIT-Bombay, IIT-Delhi and IISc-Bangalore have found place among the top 200 in the prestigious Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings.
- **Top five are;** Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Stanford University, Harvard University, University of Oxford and California Institute of Technology.
- IIT-Madras, IIT-Kharagpur, IIT-Kanpur and IIT-Roorkee are also among the top 400 institutes. IIT-Guwahati, ranked 491, saw a decline in its ranking since last year when it was placed at 472.
- The Delhi University improved on its last year's rank of 487 and is placed at 474 in the latest rankings.
- Other universities that figured in the rankings are Jamia Millia Islamia, Jadavpur University, Aligarh Muslim University, Hyderabad University, Calcutta University and Mumbai University.
- Historically, such rankings have favoured universities oriented towards science, technology, engineering, mathematics disciplines and medicine, but the JGU was the only Indian university focusing on social sciences, arts, humanities and professions such as law, business administration and architecture.
- There are a total of 23 Indian institutions in the top 1,000. While most are government-funded universities, five are privately funded.
- The Manipal Academy of Higher Education, which falls within the 701-750 ranking band, is the top private university in the country.
- Indian science and technology institutions funded by the government scored high in terms of citations per faculty, with the IISc, Bengaluru, achieving a perfect 100 in that indicator.
- For private institutions on the list, on the other hand, it was other indicators such as teacher-student ratio, and international faculty and student populations that propelled them to the top

Border Area Development Programme (BADP)

(Source: Ministry of Home Affairs)

BADP is an important intervention of the Central Government to bring about development of border areas by supplementing the State Plan Funds to bridge the gaps in socio-economic infrastructure on one hand and improving the security environment in border areas on the other.

Background

BADP was initiated in the border areas of the western region during that Seventh Five Year Plan period for ensuring balanced development of border areas through the development of infrastructure and promotion of a sense of security among the border population.

Aim

The programme aims to meet the special development needs of the people living in remote and inaccessible areas situated near the international border and to saturate the border areas with the essential infrastructure through convergence of Central/State/BADP/Local schemes and participatory approach.

Implementing agency

The **Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs** has been implementing the Border Area Development Programme (BADP) through the State Governments as part of a comprehensive approach to Border Management.

Coverage

- The BADP will continue to be a **100% centrally funded programme**. The Programme will cover all the villages which are located within the **0-10 Km of the International Border, irrespective of the border block abutting on the International Border or not**.
- **The State covered are** Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.
- **Under this programme priority is given to the areas closer to the border.**

Umbrella Scheme for Modernisation of Police Force

(sources: PIB and Ministry of Home)

The Government of India in 2017, approved implementation of umbrella scheme of "Modernisation

of Police Forces(MPF)" for three years' period from 2017-18 to 2019-20

Objectives

- The objective of the scheme is to **gradually reduce the dependence of the State Governments on the Army and the Central Armed Police Forces** to control internal security and law and order situations by equipping the State Police Forces adequately and strengthening their training infrastructure.
- The focus of the scheme is to **strengthen police infrastructure at cutting edge level by construction of secure police stations**, training centres, police housing (residential), equipping the police stations with the required mobility, modern weaponry, communication equipment and forensic set-up etc.

The umbrella scheme comprises two verticals and 17 sub-schemes as below:

The umbrella scheme has two verticals – **Security Related Expenditure (SRE) of specific theatres & Modernisation of Police Forces**. Salient features of the Modernisation of Police Forces vertical are given below:

Vertical I : Modernisation of Police Forces(MPF) of States & UTs, the sub-schemes under it are;

- **Three Central Sector Sub schemes**
 1. Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and System(CCTNS)
 2. Projects under Inter-State Police Wireless
 3. Implementation of ePrisons
- **Two State Sector Sub schemes**
 1. Assistance to States for Modernization of Police
 2. Assistance to States for Special Projects /programmes for upgrading Police infrastructure [Forensic Laboratories & Institutes and equipment]

Vertical II: Security Related Expenditure (SRE) for Jammu & Kashmir(J&K) /North East(NE) / Left Wing Extremism(LWE)

- **Seven Central Sector Sub schemes**
 1. Assistance to Central Agencies & others for LWE Management
 2. Civic Action Plan (CAP) for LWE areas
 3. Media plan (Advertising & Publicity) for LWE areas
 4. Special Central Assistance(SCA) to 35 worst LWE affected districts
 5. SRE (LWE) (Central Sector)
 6. SRE (J&K) : Relief & Rehabilitation
 7. SRE (J&K): Security Environment
- **Five State Sector Sub schemes**
 1. SRE (J&K) - Police
 2. SRE (NE)
 3. SRE(LWE)

4. Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS) along with construction of 250 **fortified Police Stations in LWE affected States**
5. Reimbursement to States for administration of Central Acts & Regulations

Central assistance for MPF

- Central assistance is provided to the State Governments for weapons, equipment for Forensics, Information Technology, Communication, Training etc.
- The scheme is **focused on facilitating targeted interventions and 'mobility' and 'construction of police infrastructure including housing'** is now permitted in case of Jammu & Kashmir, insurgency affected North Eastern (NE) States and Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) affected Districts.
- Three Himalayan States, namely, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh and 8 North Eastern States including Sikkim are eligible to receive financial assistance on 90:10 Centre: State sharing basis.
- The remaining States are eligible for financial assistance on 60:40 Centre: State sharing basis.

Why centre is supplementing the resources of states under the Modernisation of Police Forces scheme?

In India, police and law and order come under the purview of state governments. Accordingly, each state has its own police force for maintaining law and order and investigating crimes. However, **due to financial and other constraints, states have critical gaps in their policing infrastructure**. Thus the Ministry of Home Affairs has been supplementing resources of states under the Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF) scheme.

Problems related to police forces

While the MPF scheme seeks to improve police infrastructure, there are a number of structural issues that have been raised by experts over the years related to police forces. Some of them are;

1. Overburdened police force
2. Poor quality of investigation
3. Police accountability

Samagra Siksha Abhiyan

(Source:PIB & MHRD website)

Background

The **Union Budget, 2018-19**, has proposed to treat school education holistically without segmentation from pre-nursery to Class 12. Samagra Shiksha - an overarching programme for the school education sector **extending from pre-school to class 12** has been, therefore, prepared with the **broader goal of**

improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.

Sustainable Development Goals

- **The Goal SDG-4.1** states that “By 2030, ensure that all boys and girls complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.
- Further the **SDG 4.5** states that “**By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education** and ensure equal access to all levels of Education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations”

The major objectives of the Scheme are;

- Provision of **quality education** and enhancing learning outcomes of students.
- Bridging Social and Gender Gaps in School Education.
- Ensuring equity and inclusion at all levels of school education.
- Ensuring minimum standards in schooling provisions.
- Promoting Vocationalisation of education.
- Support States in implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009; and
- Strengthening and up-gradation of State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERTs)/State Institutes of Education and District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) as a nodal agencies for teacher training.

Important features

Holistic approach to education

- Treat school education holistically as a continuum from Pre-school to Class 12
- Inclusion of senior secondary levels and pre-school levels in support for School education for the first time

Administrative reform

- Single and **unified administrative structure** leading to harmonized implementation
- **Flexibility** to States to prioritise their interventions under the Scheme
- An integrated administration looking at ‘school’ as a continuum

Focus on Quality of Education

- Enhanced focus on improving the quality of education by **focusing on the two T’s – Teachers and Technology**
- Enhanced Capacity Building of Teachers and School Heads

- Focus on **strengthening Teacher Education Institutions like SCERTs and DIETs** to improve the quality of prospective teachers in the system
- SCERT to be the nodal institution for in-service and pre-service teacher training – will make training dynamic and need-based.
- **Support for Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan to promote Science and Maths learning in schools.**
- Support Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat Programme to develop foundational skills at primary level.
- Provision of library grants for every school ranging from Rs. 5000 to Rs. 20000.

Focus on Digital Education

- Support ‘**Operation Digital Board**’ in all secondary schools over a period of 5 years, which will revolutionize education- easy to understand, technology based learning classrooms will become flipped classrooms.
- Enhanced **use of digital technology in education** through smart classrooms, digital boards and DTH channels
- Digital initiatives like Unified District Information on School Education(**UDISE+**), **Shagun**, to be strengthened
- **Strengthening of ICT infrastructure** in schools from upper primary to higher secondary level.

Strengthening of Schools

- **Enhanced Transport facility** to children across all classes from I to VIII for universal access to school
- Composite school grant increased from Rs. 14,500-50,000 to Rs. 25,000- 1 Lakh and to be allocated on the basis of school enrolment.
- Specific provision for Swachhta activities – support ‘**Swachh Vidyalaya**’
- Improve the Quality of Infrastructure in Government Schools

Focus on Girl Education

- Upgradation of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) from Class 6-8 to Class 6-12.
- **Self-defence training for girls** from upper primary to senior secondary stage
- Enhanced Commitment to ‘Beti Bachao Beti Padhao’

Focus on Inclusion

- Allocation for uniforms under RTE Act enhanced from Rs. 400 to Rs. 600 per child per annum.
- Allocation for textbooks under the RTE Act, enhanced from Rs. 150/250 to Rs. 250/400 per child per annum. Energized textbooks to be introduced.
- Allocation for Children with Special Needs (CwSN) increased from Rs. 3000 to Rs. 3500 per child per annum. Stipend of Rs. 200 per month for Girls with Special Needs from Classes 1 to 12.

Focus on Skill Development

- **Exposure to Vocational Skills** at Upper Primary Level would be extended.
- **Vocational education for Class 9-12** as integrated with the curriculum and to be made more practical and industry oriented.
- Reinforce emphasis on '**Kaushal Vikas**'

Focus on Sports and Physical Education

- Sports Education to be an **integral part of curriculum**
- Every school will receive **sports equipment** at the cost of Rs. 5000 for Primary Schools, Rs. 10,000 for upper primary schools and up to Rs. 25,000 for secondary and senior secondary schools to inculcate and emphasize the relevance of sports.

Focus on Regional Balance

- Promote Balanced Educational Development
- **Preference to Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs)**, **LWE affected districts**, **Special Focus Districts (SFDs)**, **Border areas** and the **117 aspirational districts** identified by Niti Aayog

Implementation

- The Scheme will be implemented as a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** by the Department **through a single State Implementation Society (SIS) at the State/UT level**.
- **At the National level**, there would be a **Governing Council** headed by Minister of Human Resource Development and a **Project Approval Board (PAB)** headed by Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy.
- The Governing Council will be empowered to modify financial and programmatic norms and approve the detailed guidelines for implementation within the overall Framework of the scheme. Such modifications will include innovations and interventions to improve the quality of school education.
- **The Department will be assisted by a Technical Support Group (TSG) at Educational Consultants of India Limited (EdCIL) to provide technical support** in functional areas pertaining to access, equity and quality education by merging the TSGs of the Schemes of SSA, RMSA and TE. States would be expected to bring a single Plan for the entire school education sector

FAME India scheme

(Source: PIB, Mint)

The **FAME(Faster Adoption and Manufacture of (Hybrid and) Electric Vehicles)** was launched by the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises in

2015 to **incentivize the production and promotion of eco-friendly vehicles including electric vehicles and hybrid vehicles.**

Two phases of the scheme

- **Phase I:** started in 2015 and was completed on March 31st, 2019.
- **Phase II:** started from April 1st, 2019, will be completed by March 31st, 2022.

Salient features of the scheme

- The scheme provides the incentive in the form of subsidies to manufacturers of electric vehicles and infrastructure providers of electric vehicles.
- It is a **part of the National Electric Mobility Plan**
- Encouraging electric vehicles by providing subsidies is the main thrust of the scheme.
- The vehicles such as two wheelers, three wheelers, electric and hybrid cars and electric buses obtained the subsidy benefit of the scheme. It also covers electric and Hybrid technologies like Mild Hybrid, Strong Hybrid, Plug in Hybrid & Battery Electric Vehicles.
- **The focus areas under the FAME**
 1. Technology development
 2. Demand creation
 3. Pilot projects
 4. Charging infrastructure
- **Implementing agency:** Department of Heavy Industry, Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises

FAME II

This second phase of FAME is an expanded version of the first phase.

Key Features

- The Phase-II of the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles (FAME-India) Scheme proposes to give a **push to electric vehicles (EVs) in public transport and seeks to encourage adoption of EVs by way of market creation and demand aggregation.**
- The scheme envisages the **holistic growth of EV industry, including providing for charging infrastructure, research and development** of EV technologies and push towards greater **indigenization.**
- The outlay of ₹10,000 crore has been made for three years till 2022 for FAME 2 scheme. There is also provision for setting up of **charging stations** for electric vehicles in India.
- Under the scheme the government will offer **incentives for electric buses, three-wheelers and four-wheelers to be used for commercial purposes.**
- It is mentioned that the **plug-in hybrid vehicles and those with a sizeable lithium-ion battery**

and electric motor will also be included in the scheme and fiscal support offered depending on the size of the battery.

- FAME 2 will offer incentives to manufacturers, who invest in developing electric vehicles and its components, including lithium-ion batteries and electric motors.
- The centre has asked **states to frame their EV policy** and provide additional fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to manufacturers and buyers.
- **Eligibility to get incentive** : Only buses priced up to ₹2 crore, strong and plug-in hybrids under ₹15 lakh, three-wheelers under ₹5 lakh and two-wheelers under ₹1.5 lakh will be eligible for incentives.
- **Incentive and a committee to review the incentives:**
 1. The centre plans to roll out an incentive of ₹10,000 per kilowatt (kW) for two-, three- and four-wheelers, based on the size of their batteries.
 2. To encourage **state transport units (STUs)** to buy more electric buses, ₹20,000 per kW will be offered as an incentive.
 3. The incentives may further be subject to bidding by original equipment manufacturers.
 4. A **committee will review** the incentives after a certain period.
 5. Electric buses will be offered **incentives on the basis of the operational expenditure model adopted by STUs.**

Significance of the FAME II with respect to charging infrastructure

- Under the scheme the centre will invest in setting up charging stations, with the **active participation of public sector units and private players.**
- It has also been proposed to provide **one slow-charging unit for every electric bus and one fast-charging station for 10 electric buses.**
- Projects for charging infrastructure will include those needed to extend electrification for running vehicles such as **pantograph charging and flash charging.**
- FAME 2 will also **encourage interlinking of renewable energy sources with charging infrastructure.**

About National Electric Mobility Mission Plan 2020

- It is a National Mission document providing the vision and the roadmap for the faster adoption of electric vehicles and their manufacturing in the country.
- This plan has been designed to enhance national fuel security, to provide affordable and environmentally friendly transportation and to enable the Indian automotive industry to achieve global manufacturing leadership.

- As part of the NEMMP 2020, Department of Heavy Industry formulated a Scheme viz. Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India) Scheme in the year 2015 to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same.
- Under the NEMMP 2020, there is an **ambitious target to achieve 6-7 million sales of hybrid and electric vehicles by the year 2020.**
- Based on the experience gained in the Phase-I of FAME India Scheme, it has been observed that sufficient number of charging infrastructure is required to achieve the expected outcome of the plan, which is being addressed presently in Phase-II of FAME Scheme.

Classical status to Indian languages

A proposal for granting Classical status to Marathi Language was received from Marathi Language Department, Government of Maharashtra. The said proposal was placed before the Committee of Linguistic Experts for its consideration.

History of classical languages

Tamil academicians made the first call for a classical language. They asserted that the anthologies of Sangam should be regarded as classical languages. It is an ancient language and the old Tamil is the prototype of the Dravidian family language. The govt took a note and consulted the Sahitya Akademi specialists afterwards. A committee was later created to grant the status of Classical Languages and some criteria were developed.

Criteria related to Classical languages in India

The criteria evolved by Government to determine declaration of a language as a Classical language is as under:

- High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of **1500-2000 years.**
- A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a **valuable heritage** by generations of speakers.
- **The literary tradition be original** and not borrowed from another speech community.
- The classical language and literature being **distinct from modern**, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.

Current classical languages

- Tamil (2004)
- Sanskrit (2005)
- Kannada (2008)

- Telugu (2008)
- Malayalam (2013)
- Odia (2014)

22 languages recognised under the 8th schedule of India

Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili, Dogri.

National Food Security Act-2013

The basic concept of food security globally is to **ensure that all people, at all times, should get access to the basic food for their active and healthy life and is characterized by availability, access, utilization and stability of food.**

Though the Indian Constitution does not have any explicit provision regarding right to food, the fundamental right to life enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution may be interpreted to include right to live with human dignity, which may include the right to food and other basic necessities. Though the issue of food security at the household level was being addressed by the Government from long through the Public Distribution System and the Targeted Public Distribution System, the enactment of the National Food Security Act, (NFSA) in 2013 marks a **paradigm shift in the approach to food security from welfare to a rights based approach.**

Government of India enacted National Food Security Act (NFSA) in July, 2013 which gives legal entitlement to 67% of the population (75% in rural areas and 50% in urban areas) to receive highly subsidized foodgrains.

Key features of the act

- **Entitlements under NFSA**
 1. Highly subsidized food grains under PDS
 2. Nutritious meal, free of charge to pregnant women & lactating mothers and children up to 6 years of age under ICDS.
 3. Nutritious meal, free of charge to children in the 6-14 years of age group under MDM.
 4. Maternity benefits of Rs. 6000 to Pregnant Women & Lactating Mothers
- PDS now governed by provisions of NFSA
- **Coverage under PDS:** 75% Rural and 50% Urban population; State-wise coverage determined by the Planning Commission (now NITI Ayog) on the basis of 2011-12 Household Consumption Expenditure survey of NSSO.
- **Coverage** of two-thirds of the total population at the all India level, under two categories of beneficiaries – Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households and Priority Households (PHH).

- **Foodgrains Entitlement:** 5 kg per person for PHH category and 35 kg per household for AAY households.
- **Prices:** Rs. 3/2/1 per kg for rice, wheat and coarse grain.
- No reduction in foodgrains allocation to any State/UT under NFSA – Tide Over allocation.
- **Identification of Households:** to be done by States/UTs, which are required to frame their own criteria
- **Women Empowerment:** Eldest woman (18 years or above) to be the head of the household for the purpose of issuing of ration cards.
- **Grievance Redressal Mechanism:** To be set up at the District and State levels.
- **Transparency:** Provisions for disclosure of records relating to PDS, placing beneficiaries list in public domain
- **Assistance to States/UTs** for meeting expenditure on intra-State transportation & handling of foodgrains and FPS Dealers' margin

Sustainable Development Goals

Sl.	Goals	Targets
1	Goal-2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	2.1 By 2030 end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round 2.C Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives, and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility
2	Goal-12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

Status of States joining NFSA

Department of Food & Public Distribution
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution
Government of India

Date of Implementation	Name of States/UTs
July - December, 2013	Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab (5)
January - June, 2014	Karnataka, Chattisgarh, Maharashtra, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar (6)
July - December, 2014	.
January - June, 2015	West Bengal (1)
July - December, 2015	Lakshadweep, Tripura, Puducherry, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Telangana, Daman & Diu, Odisha, Assam, Goa, Andhra Pradesh (11)
January - June, 2016	Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Meghalaya, Jammu & Kashmir, A & N Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Mizoram, Gujarat, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur (10)
July - November, 2016	Nagaland, Kerala, Tamil Nadu (3)

Norms of Expenditure



Category of States and Union Territories	Norms of expenditure (Rate in Rs per quintal)			Central Share (In percent)
	Intra-State movement and handling	Fair Price Shop Dealers' margin		
		Basic	Additional margin for sale through point of sale device	
General	65	70	17	50
Special	100	143	17	75

Special category States/UTs includes 8 State of NE (including Sikkim), Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Lakshadweep, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

- The Act is now being implemented in all States/UTs and covers about 81.35 crore persons.
- The annual allocation of foodgrain under National Food Security Act and Other Welfare Schemes is about 610 Lakh Metric Tons.
- There is no identified category of BPL under the NFSA. However, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries are clearly identified.
- The State food Commission to monitor the act:** The NFSA provides for the creation of State Food Commissions. Each Commission shall consist of a chairperson, five other members and a member-secretary (including at least two women and one member each from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes).
- State Commission's main function is to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the act,** give advice to the state governments and their agencies, and inquire into violations of entitlements. State Commissions also have to hear appeals against the orders of the District Grievance Redressal Officer.
- Open Market Sale Scheme:** In order to liquidate the excess stock of foodgrain in the Central Pool, Government of India avails the available options of disposal of the excess stock of foodgrain through Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) and Export on Government-to-Government basis, as export from public stockholding is not compliant to WTO norms.

Challenges in PDS

- Implementation/ distribution lies with the States/UTs
- Governance ethos differs from State to State
- Dynamic target population
 1. Migration
 2. Birth/Death
 3. Status mobility
- Lack of Transparency
 1. Bogus/Ghost ration cards
 2. Manual records
 3. Inclusion/ exclusion errors
- Leakages & diversion
- No possibility of Portability

Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER)

It is a Central Sector Scheme, a **sub-mission under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**, launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare for **implementation in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura**, during the 12th plan period.

Aim

Development of certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growers with consumers and to support the development of entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification, to the creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative.

Mission objectives

- To develop crop commodity specific organic value chain and address gaps in organic crop production,** wild crop harvesting, organic livestock management and processing handling and **marketing of organic agricultural products through:**
 1. Developing crop specific organic production **clusters** with necessary infrastructural, technical and financial support
 2. By facilitating **partnerships between farmers and organic businesses:** Local enterprises and/or Farmer Producer Companies based on back-to-back long-term trade relations with clients in domestic and export markets.
 3. By providing **enabling environment** for project initiatives and development programs with necessary support for organic value chain development and create market access.
- To empower producers with program ownership by organizing them into farmer producer organizations/ companies.**
- To replace conventional farming/subsistence farming system into local resource based, self sustainable, high value **commercial organic enterprise.**
- Developing **commodity specific commercial organic value chain** under integrated and concentrated approach with **end-to-end facilities** for production, processing, storage and marketing.
- Development of organic parks/zones** with facilities for collection, aggregation, value addition, processing, storage and market-linkages for specific commodities requiring capital intensive technology.
- Develop NER products as brands/labels through **brand building** and facilitating stronger

marketing access under the ownership of growers organizations/ companies.

- **Creating state specific lead agency (Organic Commodity Board or Organic Mission)** for coordinating, monitoring, supporting and financing the development and operationalization of entire value chain.
- To make Northeastern states as major suppliers of organic commodities for national and international markets.



Project strategies

- To mobilize commodity clusters and facilitate capacity building, handholding, and infrastructure creation for on-farm input production, training on package of practices and facilitating **certification services to farmers**.
- To facilitate creation and **linking of enterprises** (local enterprises/ farmer producer companies) that can create and operate collection, aggregation and post harvest processes, trade organic products and provide necessary services to farmers and to work towards increasing their market.
- To **set up lead agencies at central and state** to partner with value chain supporting agencies, service providers and institute business development consultancies.
- To provide **access to information**, know- how and finance and enabling the enterprises to offer efficient services, support them in building required management capacities, and stimulating market growth.

Mission components

A. Value Chain Production

1. Developing crop specific organic production clusters
 - Clusters development and formation of Farmer Producer Organizations/ Companies
 - Assistance for on-farm input production unit and off-farm inputs
 - Assistance for quality seed and planting material

2. Support for extension services, input facilitation, training handholding and certification at production stage
 - Assistance for setting up of input delivery, distribution centres and agri machinery custom hiring centre
 - Training, handholding, ICS management, documentation and certification of crop production through service providers

B. Value Chain Processing

1. **Value Chain Post Harvest**
 - Financial assistance for setting up of functional infrastructure for collection and grading units
2. **Value Chain Processing**
 - Financial assistance for setting up of integrated processing units
3. **Value Chain Packaging, Storage and Transportation**
 - Integrated pack house
 - Transportation
 - Cold Chain Component (Refrigerated transport vehicle and Pre-cooling/ cold stores/ ripening chambers)

C. Value chain Marketing

1. Branding, labeling, packaging, publicity and certification of processing units etc
2. Seminars/ conferences, workshops, Buyer-seller meets, Auction meetings, festivals
3. Consumer awareness Information dissemination through publicity, printed literature, films and local advertisements
4. Hiring of space in prime markets

D. Value Chain Support Agencies

1. **Setting up of Lead agency**
 - Staff, Manpower, Travel and contingencies, Institutional strengthening and hire/ purchase of machinery and equipments
 - Setting up of certification bodies
2. Mission management at DAC&FW
 - Any other Innovative requirement including surveys, consultancies information and knowledge ecosystem etc

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana

About the scheme

- The Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), **launched in 2015**, is an **extended component of Soil Health Management (SHM) under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**

- PKVY aims at supporting and promoting organic farming, in turn resulting in improvement of soil health.
- The scheme promotes Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) for India (PGS- India) form of organic certification that is built on mutual trust, locally relevant and mandates the involvement of producers and consumers in the process of certification. (PGS – India operates outside the framework of “Third Party Certification”).
- **Funding pattern:** It is in the ratio of 60:40 by the Central and State Governments respectively. In case of North Eastern and Himalayan States, Central Assistance is provided in the ratio of 90:10 (Centre: State) and for Union Territories, the assistance is 100%.
- **Target:** The Scheme targets to form 10,000 clusters of 20 ha each and bring nearly two lakh hectares of agricultural area under organic farming by 2017-18.

Objective

The objective is to produce agricultural products free from chemicals and pesticides residues by adopting eco- friendly, low- cost technologies. Key Thrust areas of PKVY in promoting organic farming include the following:

- Promote organic farming among rural youth/ farmers/ consumers/ traders
- Disseminate latest technologies in organic farming
- Utilize the services of experts from public agricultural research system in India
- Organize a minimum of one cluster demonstration in a village

Approach

The scheme is implemented in a time frame of three years in line with the PGS-India's prescribed conversion period of 36 months from conventional farms to organic.

Key features of the scheme

- The cluster chosen for Organic Farming shall be 20 ha or 50 acres in extent and in as contiguous a form as possible.
- Total financial assistance available for a 20 ha or 50 acre cluster shall be a maximum of Rs. 10 lakhs for farmer members and Rs. 4.95 lakh for mobilization and PGS Certification with a subsidy ceiling of one hectare per farmer .
- Of the total number of farmers in a cluster, a minimum of 65 percent farmers should be allocated to small and marginal category, to be fulfilled at cluster level as far as practicable and where not possible to be satisfied at Mandal/Block/ Taluka or District level.

- At least 30% of the budget allocations need to be earmarked for women beneficiaries/ farmers

Key components

Model Organic Cluster Demonstrations:

- Model Organic Cluster Demonstrations aim at boosting/ promoting organic farming among rural youth/ farmers/ consumers/ traders by creating awareness on the latest technologies of organic farming. These are conducted at the farmer's field in clusters of 20 ha or 50 acres under PKVY
- **Implementing Agencies (IAs)** primarily are the Zonal Councils⁷ of National Centre for Organic Farming (NCOF), Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) registered Regional Councils (RCs) and other Public Sector Organisations of DAC & FW.

Model Organic Farm:

- The Model Organic Farm aims at demonstrating conversion of conventional land into organic farming practices in one hectare parcels. This is to spread the information on the latest technologies of various units of organic inputs production through exposure visits to farmers.
- As several of the central and state government organisations and other public sector organisations have their own farms for demonstration of technologies in various farming practices, these institutions shall develop model Organic Farms.
- Maximum three model organic farm demonstrations shall be allocated to each organisation with a minimum of one farm in one institution in one year

e-NAM (National Agriculture Market)

What is it?

National Agriculture Market (eNAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.

Implementing agency

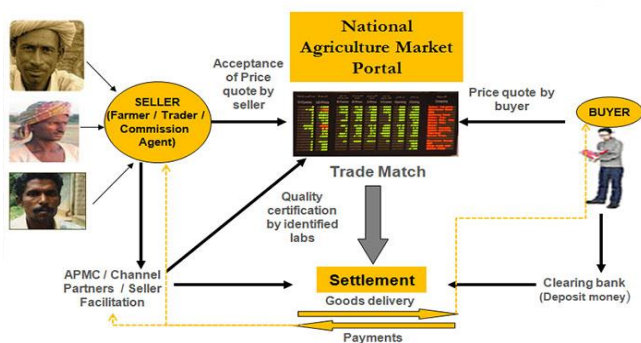
Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the lead agency for implementing eNAM under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India.

Vision

To promote uniformity in agriculture marketing by streamlining of procedures across the integrated markets, removing the information asymmetry between buyers and sellers and promoting real time price discovery based on actual demand and supply.

Mission

Integration of APMCs across the country through a common online market platform to facilitate pan-India trade in agriculture commodities, providing better price discovery through transparent auction process based on quality of produce along with timely online payment.



Objective

Providing competitive and remunerative price to farmers for their produce through online competent bidding process.

Other key highlights

- It was launched by the government of India in 2016.
- The eNam provides a single-window service for all APMC related services and information, such as commodity arrivals and prices, provision for responding to the trade offers, buy and sell trade offers, among other services.

Six New features added by the Ministry

The Agriculture Ministry added following six new features to eNam to make it more user friendly;

- MIS dashboard for better analysis
- BHIM payment facility by traders
- Mobile payment facility by traders
- Enhanced features on mobile app such as gate entry and payment through mobile,
- Integration of farmer's database and
- e-Learning module in e-NAM website.

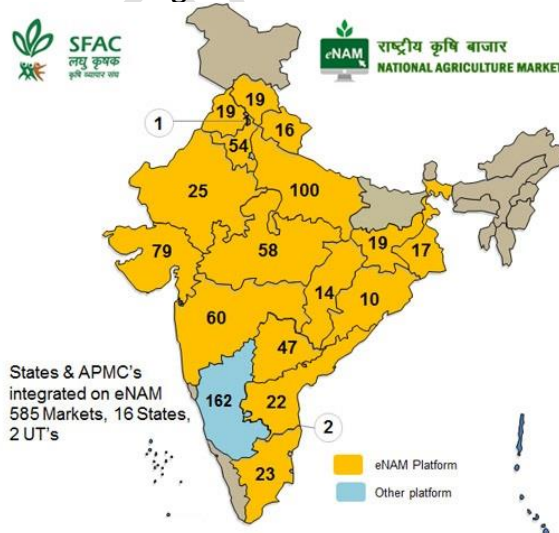
About Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC)

- It is an Autonomous Society promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India. It was registered under Societies Registration Act of 1860 in January 1994
- The Society is governed by Board of Management which is chaired, ex-officio, by Hon'ble Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare as the President and the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, is the ex-officio Vice-President.
- SFAC is implementing the central schemes of Government of India namely VCA, EGCGS for

economic inclusion of small and marginal farmers in agribusiness activities.

- Society is pioneer in organising small and marginal farmers as Farmers Interest Groups, Farmers Producers Organisation and Farmers Producers Company** for endowing them with bargaining power and economies of scale.
- It provides a platform for increased accessibility and cheaper availability of agricultural inputs to small and marginal farmers and in establishing forward and backward linkages in supply chain management. This initiative has triggered mobilization of farmers for aggregation across the country with the ultimate aim of sustainable business model and augmented incomes.
- Recently the Society has been entrusted with the task of implementation of the critically important Delhi Kisan Mandi and National Agriculture Market Scheme on e-platform to progressively free agricultural trade and offer price discovery to farmers.

eNam Coverage



m- KISAN portal-Mobile based services for farmers

The project conceptualized, designed and developed in-house within the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation has widened the outreach of scientists, experts and Government officers posted down to the Block level to disseminate information, give advisories and to provide advisories to farmers through their mobile telephones. **It was launched by the President of India in 2013.**

This SMS Portal for Farmers has empowered all Central and State Government Organizations in Agriculture & allied sectors (including State Agriculture Universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Agromet Forecasts Units of India Meteorological Department, ICAR Institutes, Organization in Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries etc.) to give information/services/advisories

to farmers by SMS in their language, preference of agricultural practices and locations.

What is it?

It is a unified platform from where officials and scientists can send targeted text and voice based advisories to the farmers on a host of issues related to agriculture and allied sectors.

Objectives of the portal

- To make SMS and other mobile-based services as a **tool of 2 way agricultural extension** in which not only information/advisory services are provided to farmers as per his/her need in a broadcast mode (in keeping with selection of crop / agricultural practice, requirements and location) but they can also raise specific queries through Pull SMS or USSD.
- **Making use of the huge spread of mobile telephony in the rural areas to cover every farm household in the country** to overcome the major impediment in bringing level playing field for small and marginal farmers.
- **Centralized system** wherein different modes of information flow are channelized and spread to the farmers in their **own language**.
- **Integrated Portal** to ensure proper storage in previous advisories/messages and also effective monitoring at various levels.
- **Integration of database of farmers** from the State Governments, Universities, KVKs web-based registration, Kisan Call Centres, etc.
- Since effective internet penetration in the rural areas is about 5% only, text messaging in the language of the farmer transcends the barriers of the digital divide.
- **Provision of web-based services through SMS or USSD** is thus the fulcrum of the whole Project.
- **Integration with other farmer-centric services such as Kisan Call Centres, Common Service Centres, Web Portals** for extracting relevant information and also for feeding data from remote locations where the Internet is not available or is unreliable.

Features of m-Kisan

- **Different languages:** Nearly 3000 officers and experts from the Government of India (DAC, ICAR, DAHDF, IMD, CWC) and State Governments & its organizations down to Block level, SAUs, KVKs and AMFUs have been activated and are using the Portal in 12 different languages by using easy phonetic typing.
- **Grouping of farmers:** The farmers have been grouped based on the State, District, Block and the Crops/Activities selected by respective farmers
- **Messages are sent based on technical literature** prepared by the authorities, Government orders,

websites and, most importantly, Farmers' Portal (Beta Version) of which SMS Portal is a part.

- **Integration of web services:** Some web services across the country have already been integrated with the SMS Portal and many more are in the queue. Some of these include BuyerSeller Interface, choice of machine & dealer, Kisan Call Centre, market prices, NeGP-A roll-out, farm-mechanization, micro-irrigation, animal husbandry, fertilizer testing, etc

High powered committee of chief minister's - for 'Transformation for Indian Agriculture'

(Source: PIB)

Government of India has constituted a high powered committee of chief ministers for transforming Indian agriculture and raising farmers' income, it will be convened by Maharashtra Chief Minister

Composition of the committee is as follows;

- Chief Minister, Maharashtra : Convenor
- Chief Minister, Karnataka: Member
- Chief Minister, Haryana : Member
- Chief Minister, Arunachal Pradesh : Member
- Chief Minister, Gujarat: Member
- Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh: Member
- Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh: Member
- Sh.Narendra Singh Tomar, Minister, Agriculture Rural Development and Panchyati Raj, GoI: Member
- A Member of NITI Aayog (Ramesh Chand): Member-Secy

The terms of Reference (ToR) of the Committee would be;

- To discuss **measures** for transformation of agriculture and raising farmers' income and **suggest modalities** for adoption and implementation of following reforms by States/UTs
- To examine various provisions of the **Essential Commodity Act (ECA), 1955** and situations that require ECA. **To suggest changes in the ECA** to attract private investments in agricultural marketing and infrastructure.
- To **suggest a mechanism for linking of market reforms with e-NAM, GRAM, and other relevant Centrally Sponsored Schemes.**
- **To suggest policy measures to;**
 1. boost agricultural export
 2. raise growth in food processing
 3. attract investments in modern market infrastructure, value chains and logistics.
- To **suggest measures to upgrade agri-technology to global standards** and improve

access of farmers to quality seed, plant propagation material and farm machinery in agriculturally advanced countries.

- To propose any other relevant reforms for the transformation of the agriculture sector and raising farmers' income.

The committee will submit its report within two months of the date of notification of the Committee.

The High Powered Committee of Chief Ministers for 'Transformation of Indian Agriculture' will be **served by NITI Aayog**.

Recent meeting of the committee

Following are the key highlights of the meeting

- The discussion focussed on the **immediate need to accelerate the growth of the food processing industry**, which is growing at a mere 1 per cent annually, and find ways to encourage the infusion of technology and private investment to modernise agriculture.
- It stressed on the **need to digitize the entire agricultural process**, from sowing and marketing to **using drones** and satellites for crop surveillance.
- It also called for **bringing down the cost of institutional credit** available for farming.
- During the meeting, The CMs took stock of the modalities for adoption and time-bound implementation of the measure by the States/UTs.
- It was mentioned that the Small traders, farmer-producer organizations and other institutions that produce crop for which minimum support price is declared by the Centre should get an **exemption from the ECA**.

Online initiatives to address the grievances of workers

(Source: PIB and related Ministries)

CPGRAMS (Centralized Public Grievance Redress And Monitoring System)

It is the platform which primarily **aims to enable submission of grievances by the aggrieved citizens including workers from anywhere and anytime (24x7)** basis to Ministries/Departments/Organisations who scrutinize and take action for speedy and favorable redressal of these grievances.

Key highlights:

- This is a Government of India Portal **aimed at providing the citizens with a platform for redress of their grievances**.
- If a person has any grievance against any Government organization in the country, he/she may lodge the grievance here which will go to the Ministry/Department/State Government concerned for immediate redress.

- **Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is the nodal agency to formulate policy guidelines for citizen-centric governance in the country.** Redress of citizen's grievances, being one of the most important initiatives of the department, **DAR&PG formulates public grievance redress mechanisms for effective and timely redress/settlement of citizen's grievances.**

EPFiGMS (EPF i Grievance Management System)

It is a customized portal with an **aim to redress grievances for the services provided by EPFO** (Employees' Provident Fund Organisation).

Key highlights:

- With this grievances can be lodged at any place and will land in the concerned office to which the grievances pertain.
- Grievance can be lodged by PF member, EPS Pensioner, Employer and Others

UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) APP

The services of EPFO (Employees' Provident Fund Organisation) for subscribers have been integrated and offered through UMANG application of Government of India.

Key highlights:

- It is **developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and National e-Governance Division (NeGD)** to drive Mobile Governance in India.
- UMANG provides a **single platform for all Indian Citizens to access pan India e-Gov services ranging from Central to Local Government bodies** and other citizen-centric services.
- UMANG intends to provide major services offered by Central and State Government departments, **Local bodies and other utility services from private organizations**. It provides a unified approach where citizens can install one application to avail multiple government services.

PENCIL (Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour) Portal

Online complaints regarding Child labour can be filed by anybody on the PENCIL Portal. The complaint gets assigned to the concerned Nodal Officer automatically by the **system for rescue, rehabilitation and mainstreaming of the child labourer.**

Key highlights:

- To establish a child labour free nation, the Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCIL) had been launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.
- **Aim:** It aims at involving Centre, State, District, Governments, civil society and the general

public in achieving the target of child labour free society.

- **Components of the platform;**

1. Child Tracking System
2. Complaint Corner
3. State Government
4. National Child Labour Project and
5. Convergence.

Shram Suvidha Portal

It operates a transparent risk-based Online Labour Inspection Service for effective enforcement of Labour Laws so as to ensure wage security, job security, social security and various other safety, health and welfare measures.

Key highlights:

- The Unified Shram Suvidha Portal is **developed to facilitate reporting of Inspections, and submission of Returns.**
- The Unified Shram Suvidha Portal has been envisaged as a **single point of contact between employer, employee and enforcement agencies** bringing in transparency in their day-to-day interactions.
- For the integration of data among various enforcement agencies, each inspectable unit under any Labour Law has been assigned one **Labour Identification Number (LIN).**

Jal Shakti Abhiyan

(source: PIB and indiawater.gov.in)

Union Jal Shakti Minister recently announced the commencement of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan - **a campaign for water conservation and water security.**

Duration and phases of the campaign

- **Phase I:** The campaign will run through citizen participation during the monsoon season, from 1st July 2019 to 15th September 2019. **(all states)**
- **Phase II:** will run from 1st October 2019 to 30th November 2019 for States receiving the North East retreating monsoons **(States with retreating monsoon).**

The focus of the campaign

The focus of the campaign will be on **water-stressed districts and blocks.**

Key highlights

- Jal Shakti Abhiyan is a **collaborative effort of various Ministries of the Government of India and State Governments, being coordinated by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation(DDWS)**
- Under the campaign teams of officers from the central government will visit and work with district administration in water-stressed districts, **to ensure five important water conservation interventions. These will be;**

1. Water conservation and rainwater harvesting.
2. Renovation of traditional and other water bodies/tanks.
3. Reuse and bore well recharge structures.
4. Watershed development and
5. Intensive afforestation.

- **Special intervention Areas**

1. **Block and District Water Conservation Plan:** Development of Block and District Water Conservation Plans (To be integrated with the District Irrigation Plans)
2. **Krishi Vigyan Kendra Mela:** Krishi Vigyan Kendra Melas to promote efficient water use for irrigation (Per Drop More Crop), and better choice of crops for water conservation
3. **Urban Waste Water Reuse:** In urban areas, plans/approvals with time bound targets to be developed for wastewater reuse for industrial and agriculture purposes. Municipalities to pass by-laws for the separation of grey water and blackwater
4. **Scientists and IITs:** Scientists and IITs to be mobilised at the national level to support the teams
5. **3D Village Contour Mapping:** 3D Village Contour Maps may be created and made accessible for efficient planning of interventions

- **Communication camp:** A large-scale communications campaign has also been planned alongside the JSA involving mass mobilization of different groups including school students, college students, swachhagrahis, Self Help Groups, Panchayati Raj Institution members, youth groups (NSS/NYKS/NCC), defence personnel, ex-servicemen and pensioners, among various others.

Water stressed districts under the campaign: Districts with critical or over-exploited groundwater levels as per the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) 2017. For states without critical and over-exploited groundwater levels, districts with the least availability of groundwater in comparison to the rest of the districts in the state have been selected.

Tentative list of world heritage sites of India - Indian side of Kailash Mansarovar

Background

The proposal for 'Sacred Mountain Landscape and Heritage Routes' (Indian side of Kailash Mansarovar) has been included in Tentative List of World Heritage Sites of India as a Mixed site in April 2019.

The site has been proposed under UNESCO criteria of Operational Guideline.

UNESCO criteria of Operational Guideline and the process involved in it

- As per UNESCO's Operational Guidelines 2017, a **site must be on the tentative list of UNESCO at least for a period of one year before proposing it for final nomination.**
- Once the nomination dossier is completed, it is sent to the **World Heritage Centre (WHC)** by the stipulated deadline of 01 February of a calendar year.
- In furtherance, an expert of the respective field in cultural & natural fields is deputed for the evaluation of site by WHC.
- Accordingly, the decision of permanent inclusion of any site in the World Heritage list is taken by the members of the World heritage committee.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India

- There are 37 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India. The sites are broken down into the following categories: 29 cultural sites, seven natural sites, and one mixed site.
- The most recent site was added in 2018 (Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai), and given the country's long history, there will likely be more added in the coming years (there are an additional 44+ sites on the UNESCO tentative list for India). Following are the important Sites of India which were added recently in the heritage list;
 1. Rani ki vav – the Queen's Stepwell (2014)
 2. Great Himalayan National Park (2014)
 3. Nalanda (2016)
 4. Khangchendzonga National Park (2016)
 5. The Architectural Works of Le Corbusier (2016)
 6. Historic City of Ahmedabad (2017)
 7. Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai (2018)

Rashtriya Aavishkar Abhiyan

What is it?

- The RAA is a convergent framework across School Education and Higher Education to motivate children of the age group from 6-18 years in learning Science, Mathematics and Technology through observation, experimentation, inference drawing, model building, etc. both through inside and outside classroom activities and processes.
- It seeks to create curiosity, excitement and spirit of innovation and exploration amongst school children by encouraging higher education institutions to become Mentoring Institutions and assist secondary and elementary schools in the study of Science and Mathematics.
- **It was launched in the year 2015**

Aim

While emphasizing the primacy of the schools and classroom transactions, the RAA **aims to leverage the potential for science, mathematics and technology learning in non-classroom settings.** Beyond the four walls of a classroom, opportunities for science, mathematics and technology learning abound. Accordingly, the 'Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan (RAA)' is planned to provide nourishing and nurturing support to and a platform for schools in a dual-track approach to make Science, Mathematics and Technology exciting to children and encourage them to have an enduring interest both inside the classroom and outside classroom activities

Objectives

- To enable children to become motivated and engaged in Science, Mathematics and Technology (SMT) through observation, experimentation, inference drawing, model building, rational reasoning, testability etc.
- To create curiosity, excitement and exploration among school children in Science, Mathematics and Technology.
- To create a culture of thinking, inventing, tinkering and doing to promote enquiry based learning in Schools.
- To achieve learning levels appropriate to the class of study in Science and Mathematics.
- To encourage and nurture schools to be incubators of Innovation

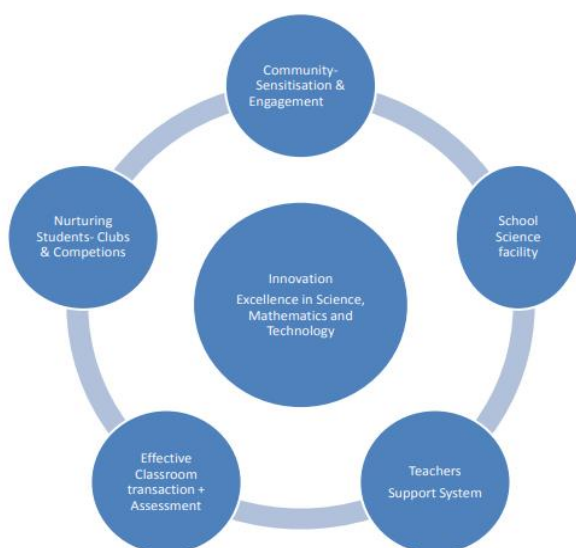
The major interventions of RAA

Major interventions under RAA provided under **Integrated scheme for School Education – Samagra Shiksha**, include

- Conduct of Science Exhibition
- Book Fair
- Quiz Competition
- Exposure/study visits for students to Higher Education institutions
- Participation of students in Inter-school/State/National level Science & Maths Competitions/Olympiads.
- Strengthening of School Science and Mathematics laboratories.
- Use of teaching-learning equipment and material including Digital models and
- Use of technology in Science and Mathematics Teaching.

This is an on-going programme and is for the benefit of all the school students.

Specific initiatives planned under the Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan



National Digital Library of India

Who initiated?

Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) under its **National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT)** has initiated the National Digital Library of India (NDL India) pilot project.

Objective

To collect and collate metadata and provide full-text index from several national and international digital libraries, as well as other relevant sources.

Key Highlights

- It was initiated by the **MHRD** to develop a framework of virtual repository of learning resources with a single-window search facility.
- It was launched in 2016 and dedicated to the nation in 2018
- Filtered and federated searching is employed to facilitate focused searching so that learners can find out the right resource with least effort and in minimum time.
- **Content of any language:** NDL India is designed to hold content of any language and provides interface support for leading Indian languages.
- **All academics:** It is being arranged to provide support for all academic levels including researchers and life-long learners, all disciplines, all popular form of access devices and differently-abled learners.
- **Helpful to students:** It is being developed to help students to prepare for entrance and competitive examination, to enable people to learn and prepare from best practices from all over the world and to facilitate researchers to perform inter-linked exploration from multiple sources.

- It is a digital repository containing textbooks, articles, videos, audio-books, lectures, simulations, fiction and all other kinds of learning media.
- The NDLI provides free of cost access to many books in English and the Indian languages.
- The pilot project is devising a framework that is being scaled up with respect to content volume and diversity to serve all levels and disciplines of learners.
- It is being **developed at Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur.**

STRIDE - Scheme for Trans-Disciplinary Research for India's Developing Economy

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has approved a new scheme - 'Scheme for Trans-disciplinary Research for India's Developing Economy' (STRIDE).

Objectives of STRIDE:

- To **identify young talent**, strengthen research culture, build capacity, promote innovation and support trans-disciplinary research for India's developing economy and national development.
- To **fund multi-institutional network** high-impact research projects in humanities and human sciences.

STRIDE components:

Component-1

- It will endeavour to **identify the motivated young talents with research and innovation aptitude** in universities and colleges.
- The Scheme will provide research capacity building in diverse disciplines by mentoring, nurturing and supporting young talents to innovate pragmatic solutions for local, regional, national and global problems.
- This component is open to all disciplines for grant upto 1 crore.

Component-2

- It will be mainly to **enhance problem solving skills with help of social innovation** and action research to improve wellbeing of people and contribute for India's developing economy.
- **Collaborations between universities, government, voluntary organizations** and industries is encouraged under this scheme.
- This component is **open to all disciplines** for grant upto 50 lakh – 1 crore.

Component-3

- It will **fund high impact research projects in the identified thrust areas in humanities and human sciences** through national network of eminent scientists from leading institutions.
- **Disciplines eligible for funding under this component include:** Philosophy, History, Archaeology, Anthropology, Psychology, Liberal Arts, Linguistics, Indian Languages and Culture, Indian Knowledge Systems, Law, Education, Journalism, Mass Communication, Commerce, Management, Environment and Sustainable Development.
- Grant available for this component is upto 1 crore for one HEI and upto 5 crores for multi institutional network.
- To encourage high quality high impact research in humanities, there is a provision to identify experts and invite them to develop a proposal. UGC is also proposing to provide a grant of Rs 2 lakh for developing proposals.

Key features of STRIDE

- STRIDE will provide support to research projects that are socially relevant, locally need-based, nationally important and globally significant.
- STRIDE shall support research capacity building as well as basic, applied and transformational action research that can contribute to national priorities with **focus on inclusive human development.**
- STRIDE shall support creation, **development, and integration of new ideas**, concepts, and practices for the public good and strengthening civil society.
- STRIDE will provide support to the innovative research projects that are Socially Relevant, Locally Need-based, Nationally Important and Globally Significant.
- The ten grand challenges facing the humanities in India described in the report to MHRD are part of thrust areas identified for funding under STRIDE.

Significance

- STRIDE scheme will **strengthen transdisciplinary research culture and innovation in colleges and universities** and help students and faculty to contribute towards India's developing economy with the help of collaborative research.
- The focus on Humanities and Human Sciences will **boost quality research on Indian languages and knowledge systems.**
- STRIDE scheme will help students and faculty to undertake collaborative research to explore these knowledge resources for India's developing economy.
- It will provide an **opportunity to build multisectoral linkages between university-government-community-industry** for national development and wellbeing of people.

- In addition, STRIDE will give a major impetus to high impact research in Humanities and Human Sciences.
- Trans-disciplinary research generates knowledge through the use of multi and inter-disciplinary concepts and integrates new theories among science and society.

Prime minister employment generation programme

This Scheme was launched for providing financial assistance to set up new enterprises under PMEGP

Implementing agencies

- The scheme is implemented by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) functioning as the nodal agency at the national level.
- At the state level, the scheme is implemented through State KVIC Directorates, State Khadi and Village Industries Boards (KVIBs), District Industries Centres (DICs) and banks. In such cases, KVIC routes government subsidy through designated banks for eventual disbursement to the beneficiaries/entrepreneurs directly into their bank accounts.

Nature of assistance under the scheme

- The maximum cost of the project/unit admissible in the manufacturing sector is ₹ 25 lakhs and in the business/service sector, it is ₹ 10 lakhs.
- Categories of beneficiaries;

Categories of beneficiaries under PMEGP	Rate of (Margin Money) Subsidy (of project cost)	
Area (location of project/unit)	Urban	Rural
General Category	15%	25%
Special (including SC / ST / OBC / Minorities/Women, Ex-servicemen, Physically handicapped, NER, Hill and Border areas etc.	25%	35%

- The balance amount of the total project cost will be provided by the banks in the form of term loan and working capital.

Eligibility to apply

- Any individual, above 18 years of age.
- At least VIII standard pass for projects costing above Rs.10 lakh in the manufacturing sector and above Rs. 5 lakh in the business/service sector. Only new projects are considered for sanction under PMEGP. business/service
- Self Help Groups (including those belonging to BPL provided that they have not availed benefits under any other Scheme), Institutions registered under Societies Registration Act,1860;
- Production Co-operative Societies and Charitable Trusts are also eligible.

- Existing Units (under PMRY, REGP or any other scheme of Government of India or State Government) and the units that have already availed Government Subsidy under any other scheme of Government of India or State Government are NOT eligible

National Policy on Safety, Health, and Environment at Workplace (NPSHEW)

(Source: PIB & Ministry of Labour and Employment)

The Government of India has declared the National Policy on Safety, Health and Environment at Workplace (NPSHEW) which aims to establish a preventive safety and health culture in the country through elimination of the incidence of work-related injuries, diseases, fatalities, disasters and to enhance the well-being of employees in all the sectors of economic activity in the country. Several steps are taken for promoting and propagating the objective of safety and health by holding various conferences, awareness camps, safety weeks, campaigns, awards and conducting of surveys etc.

Key features

Goals

The Government firmly believes that building and maintaining national preventive safety and health culture is the need of the hour. With a view to develop such a culture and to improve the safety, health, and environment at the workplace, it is essential to meet the following requirements:-

- Providing a statutory framework on Occupational Safety and Health in respect of all sectors of industrial activities including the construction sector, designing suitable control systems of compliance, enforcement and incentives for better compliance.
- Providing administrative and technical support services.
- Providing a system of incentives to employers and employees to achieve higher health and safety standards.
- Providing for a system of non-financial incentives for improvement in safety and health.
- Establishing and developing the research and development capability in emerging areas of risk and providing for effective control measures.
- Focusing on prevention strategies and monitoring performance through improved data collection system on injuries and diseases.
- Developing and providing required technical manpower and knowledge in the areas of safety,

health, and environment at workplaces in different sectors.

- Promoting inclusion of safety, health, and environment, improvement at workplaces as an important component in other relevant national policy documents.
- Including safety and occupational health as an integral part of every operation

Objectives

The policy seeks to bring the national objectives into focus as a step towards improvement in safety, health, and environment at the workplace. **The objectives are to achieve**

- Continuous reduction in the incidence
- Improved coverage of work-related injuries, fatalities and diseases and provide for a more comprehensive database for facilitating better performance and monitoring.
- Continuous enhancement of community awareness regarding safety, health, and environment at workplace related areas.
- Continually increasing community expectation of workplace health and safety standards.
- Improving safety, health and environment at the workplace by the creation of "green jobs" contributing to sustainable enterprise development.

Action Programme

For the purpose of achieving the goals and objectives, the following action programme is drawn up and where necessary time-bound action programme would be initiated, namely;

- Enforcement:** By providing effective enforcement machinery as well as suitable provisions for compensation and rehabilitation of affected persons.
- National Standards:** By developing appropriate standards, codes of practices and manuals on safety, health, and environment for uniformity at the national level in all economic activities consistent with international standards and implementation by the in true spirit.
- Compliance:** By encouraging the appropriate Government to assume the fullest responsibility for the administration and enforcement of occupational safety, health and environment at workplace.
- Awareness:** By increasing awareness on safety, health and environment at the workplace through appropriate means.
- Research and Development:** By providing for research in the field of safety, health and environment at workplace, including the social and psychological factors involved, and by developing innovative methods, techniques including computer aided Risk Assessment Tools, and

approaches for dealing with safety, health and environment at workplace problems which will help in establishing standards.

- **Occupational safety and health skills development:** By providing for training programmes to increase the number and competence of personnel engaged in the field of occupational safety, health and environment at workplace.
- **Data collection:** By compiling statistics relating to safety, health and environment at workplaces, prioritizing key issues for action, conducting national studies or surveys or projects through governmental and non-governmental organizations
- **Review:** National Policy and the action programme shall be reviewed at least once in five years or earlier if felt necessary to assess the relevance of the national goals and objectives.

National Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Hub (NSSH)

(Source: PIB & website of NSSH)

The National SC/ST Hub has been **set up to provide professional support to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Entrepreneurs to fulfil the obligations under the Central Government Public Procurement Policy for Micro and Small Enterprises Order 2012**, adopt applicable business practices and leverage the Stand-Up India initiative.

The Hub would be **implemented by the Ministry of MSME through National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)**, a public-sector undertaking under the administrative control of this Ministry of MSME.

Objective

National Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Hub(NSSH) has been launched with the objective **to provide professional support to SC/ST entrepreneurs** to fulfill the obligations under the Public Procurement Policy for Micro and Small Enterprises, adopt applicable business practices and **leverage the Stand up India initiative** with an objective **to promote “enterprise culture” amongst the SC/ST Population**

The other main action points include:

- To encourage SC/ST owned units to achieve their share of at least 4% of total procurement being made by Central/State Governments, CPSEs and other government agencies
- To prepare a strategy for intervention through industry associations to sensitize, encourage and enable the SC/ST owned units for participation in the Public Procurement Process

- Collection, collation and dissemination of information regarding SC/ST enterprises and entrepreneurs
- Facilitating SC/ST Entrepreneurs to be part of vendor development programs and mentoring support by specific CPSE matching the products/services of such entrepreneurs
- Facilitating SC/ST Entrepreneurs' participation in Public Procurement through the e-platform of DGS&D and monitoring the progress



Key features

- NSSH would provide professional support to the SC/ST enterprises thereby enabling them to effectively **participate in public procurement process**. This would involve participation by CPSEs/Central Ministries, States, Industry Associations such as DICCI and others.
- The Hub would also work towards the development of new entrepreneurs to participate in the procurement process leveraging on the 'Stand up India' programme.
- Selected entrepreneurs would be provided with **support and mentoring by industry experts, CPSEs, and incubators**.
- The Hub would **operate out of the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)** headquartered in Delhi, supported by a special cell created for this purpose.
- All new and existing SC/ST entrepreneurs would be registered on the **MSME Databank** (www.msmedatabank.in) of the Ministry of MSME that would form a reliable database to enhance accessibility for the procurement agencies.
- Under **Special Marketing Assistance Scheme (SMAS) of National SC-ST Hub, marketing support is provided to SC/ST MSMEs** for enhancement of competitiveness and marketability of their products by way of

facilitating their participation in domestic and international exhibitions/trade fairs, vendors development programme, awareness campaigns, etc

- **High Powered Monitoring Committee:** Minister of MSME is the chairperson of the committee. The committee members are representatives of various stakeholders including States, various Ministries, Industry associations & SC/ST entrepreneurs. Primarily, this committee monitors the overall activities of the Hub at the highest level.

National Manufacturing Competitiveness Programme (NMCP)

(Source: PIB, India findings website)

Background

The Government has announced formulation of National Competitiveness Programme in 2005 with an objective to support the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in their endeavor to become competitive and adjust the competitive pressure caused by liberalization and moderation of tariff rates.

Objectives

The main objective of the National Manufacturing Competitiveness Programme (NMCP) is to **enhance the global competitiveness of manufacturing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**, other objectives are;

- Focus on improving competitiveness dealing with MSME sector
- Key initiative for the survival of MSMEs in domestic or international markets
- A catalyst approach or create role models
- Implementation with Public-Private Partnership
- Challenges for execution
- Essentially a Supply-side initiative
- Fear of MSMEs in revealing data.
- MSMEs are uncertain in investing their contribution

Targets

The purpose of NMCP is to expand global competitiveness among Indian MSMEs. This programme targets developing the complete value chain of the MSME sector by **means of the following components:**

- Lean Manufacturing Competitiveness Scheme,
- Design Clinic Scheme,
- Technology & Quality Up-gradation support for MSMEs (TEQUP),
- Promotion of ICT in manufacturing Sector,
- Building Awareness on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR),

- Entrepreneurial & Management Development of SMEs through incubators,
- Enabling Manufacturing Sector to be Competitive through Quality Management Standards (QMS) and Quality Technology Tools QTT (This component has been subsumed under ZED certification scheme).

Implementation of NMCP

The MSME Ministry employs the programme under the guidance of the National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council. The 10 chief components of the programme **aim to address MSME competitiveness issues in the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) mode.** The components of the NMCP are as subsequent:

- Support related to entrepreneurial and managerial development of SMEs by means of incubation
- Improving quality through Quality Management Standards in addition to Quality Technology Tools
- Technology up-gradation and quality certification assistance to SMEs
- Marketing assistance to MSMEs
- Marketing assistance for SMEs and technology up-gradation activities
- Design clinic scheme to convey design or innovation expertise
- Promotion of ICT
- Setting up the Mini Tool Room in addition to Training Centres
- Building awareness on Intellectual Property Rights
- National Programme related to the function of Lean Manufacturing

Swadesh Darshan scheme

Ministry of Tourism (MoT) launched the Swadesh Darshan Scheme (Central Sector Scheme)- for integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits in the country in 2014-15. This scheme is envisioned to synergize with other Government of India schemes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, Make in India, etc. with the idea of positioning the tourism sector as a major engine for job creation, the driving force for economic growth, building synergy with various sectors to enable tourism to realize its potential.

Scheme Objectives

- To **position tourism as a major engine of economic growth and job creation**
- Develop circuits having tourist potential in a planned and prioritized manner
- **Promote cultural and heritage value of the country** to generate livelihoods in the identified regions

- Enhancing the tourist attractiveness in a sustainable manner by developing world-class infrastructure in the circuit /destinations
- **Follow community-based development and pro-poor tourism approach**
- **Creating awareness** among the local communities about the importance of tourism for them in terms of increased sources of income, improved living standards and overall development of the area.
- To create employment through the **active involvement of local communities**
- Harness tourism potential for its effects on employment generation and economic development.
- To make full use of the potential and advantages in terms of available infrastructure, national culture and characteristic strong points of each and every region throughout the country by the **development of theme-based circuits.**
- Development of tourist facilitation services to enhance visitor experience/satisfaction.

Key features

- The scheme was completely funded by the central government of India. There are 13 cities that are under consideration of development. These 13 cities are all pilgrimage sites.
- There are 13 tourist circuits that are proposed and started under the scheme. Under these 13 circuits, there are many cities and sites are added for the visitors to get down there and enjoy their holiday.
- The scheme is a joint venture by the Central Government and the Ministry of Tourism. By launching the scheme both the ministry will be able to develop the heritage cities of the nation and conserve them for the tourists from across the globe

Definition of Tourist Circuit under the scheme

- Tourist Circuit is defined as a route having at least three major tourist destinations which are distinct and apart.
- Circuits should have well-defined entry and exit points. A tourist who enters should get motivated to visit most of the places identified in the circuit.
- A Circuit could be confined to a State or could be a regional circuit covering more than one State/Union Territory. These circuits may have one dominant theme and other sub-themes.
- Projects under the scheme shall be under the following **identified themes; Ecotourism, Wildlife, Buddhist, Desert, Spiritual, Ramayana, Krishna, Coastal, Northeast, Rural, Himalayan, Tribal and Heritage**

Criteria

A successful project shall have the following **attributes and weightage** given as per below:

- Potential to be showcased as a world-class destination with diverse tourism experiences.
- Proximity to existing destinations with connectivity and other infrastructure.
- Job creation and livelihood enhancement in the region, while conserving and promoting the local arts, cultural, handicrafts, cuisine, etc. at the destination.
- Ability to attract investment in the private sector/PPP with specific provisions.
- Follow a comprehensive area development approach for ensuring all the facilities required by the tourists in the identified circuits.
- Robust Operation and Management plan (O&M) as per pre-agreed service standards evaluated periodically by an independent agency.

Duration of scheme

At present, the duration of Swadesh Darshan Scheme is till the 14th Finance Commission Period i.e. March 2020

Inadmissible Component projects under the Scheme

The assistance under this scheme shall not be admissible for the components such as below:

- Land acquisition for development
- Resettlement and rehabilitation package
- Improvement/investments in assets/structures owned by private entities
- Accommodation
- Rejuvenation/dredging/development of bunds of a water body (man-made & natural both)
- Convention Centers / Golf Course / Aquamarine Parks /amusement parks/theme parks which shall be taken up for VGF under other schemes of the ministry.

Implementation:

Swadesh Darshan being a central sector scheme will be implemented under the overall control of Mission Director. Experts/Consultants may be engaged by executing agencies for detailed planning and designing/preparing DPR of the works/projects under the scheme

Funding pattern

- The Scheme is 100% centrally funded and efforts are made to achieve convergence with other schemes of Central and State Governments and also to leverage the voluntary funding available for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of Central Public Sector Undertakings and Corporate Sector.
- Suitable Public-Private Partnerships to be taken up for improved sustainability of the projects.
- A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) may be created for the purpose, wherever feasible.

- The funds would be released to the Implementing Agency, under Swadesh Darshan Scheme
- Up to 10% of funds shall be earmarked for IEC components (like workshops, seminars,

publications, stakeholder outreach, skill development, etc.) & Professional & Administrative Services

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