

GOVERNANCE- WELFARE SCHEMES, E-GOVERNANCE, SERVICES ETC.**National Hydrology Project (NHP)**

Union Minister of Jal Shakti would inaugurate Sustainable Water Management Conference on 6th November 2019 at Pune. The Event is likely to be attended by more than 500 International and National delegates.

About:

- To achieve sustainable development and management of water resources, Ministry of Jal Shakti (MOJS) is implementing National Hydrology Project (NHP) with active participation of the states.
- This Central Sector Scheme is being implemented by Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation with support from World Bank.
- The project has a coverage on Pan India basis and intends to set up of a system for timely and reliable water resources data acquisition, storage, collation, management and dissemination.
- In this regard, a series of annual Conferences with the theme Sustainable Water Management are being organised under NHP. First such conference was hosted in December 2018 by BBMB at Chandigarh.
- The second conference is being hosted during November 6-8, 2019 by Water Resources Department, Government of Maharashtra at Pune with the active support from National Project Monitoring Unit, NHP.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS**Pakistan Suspends Exchange of Postal Mails**

In a unilateral decision, Pakistan has stopped the exchange of postal mails with India without any prior notice.

- Under Universal Postal Union (UPU) rules, when a country decides to suspend postal exchange with a country, it must notify the operator of the other country and, if possible, the duration for which services are being stopped.
- Apart from UPU rules, three other agreements cover postal exchange between India and Pakistan:
 - Exchange of Value Payable Article, 1948
 - Exchange of Postal Article, 1974
 - International Speed Post Agreement, 1987

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

- Universal Postal Union is the specialized agency of the United Nations.
- It was established in 1874 and is the second oldest international organization worldwide after International Telecommunication Union (1865).
- Its headquarter is located in Bern, Switzerland, and consists of 192 member countries.
- The UPU consists of 4 bodies:
 - The Congress
 - The Council of Administration
 - The Postal Operations Council
 - The International Bureau
- It frames rules for international mail exchange and fixes rates for international postal services.
- It performs advisory, mediating and liaison role, and provides technical assistance where needed.
- India joined the UPU in 1876.

ISSUES RELATED TO INTERNAL SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT**Gujarat Anti-Terror Bill**

The President of India gave assent to the Gujarat Control of Terrorism and Organised Crime (GCTOC) Bill, an anti-terror legislation passed by Gujarat in 2015.

Key Provisions

- It defines a 'terrorist act', as an act committed with the intention to disturb law and order or threaten the unity, integrity, and security of the state.
- It includes economic offences namely, Ponzi schemes, multi-level marketing schemes, and organized betting.
- It also includes extortion, land grabbing, contract killings, cybercrimes, and human trafficking.
- The investigating agencies can intercept telephonic conversations and submit them as legitimate evidence in court.
- However, the approval for interceptions of telephonic conversations will be cleared at the level of additional chief secretary.
- The confessions made before a police officer will also be considered as evidence.
- However, the confessions made to an officer of the rank of Superintendent of Police (SP) or above would only be admissible in court.
- It provides 180 days' time for authorities to file a charge sheet instead of the usual 90 days and also proposes stricter conditions for bail.

- It also provides for the creation of a special court as well as the appointment of special public prosecutors.

Controversial Provisions of GCTOC Bill

- The consideration of intercepted telephonic conversations as legitimate evidence is violative of the Right to Privacy (Article 21).
- Also, the consideration of confession made before police officers as evidence is violative of the fundamental rights of an accused (Article 20).
- The extension of time for filing the charge sheet has been increased up to 180 days from for 90 days. The clause keeps a person under detention for a longer period of time.
- These provisions are on the lines of the Centre's Prevention of Terrorist Activities Act (POTA).
- But arbitrary use of such provisions led to the repulsion of POTA in 2004.

Advantages of the Bill

- Gujarat shares a border with Pakistan, and hence, such legislation is required for better safety and security, especially in a coastal and border state.
- It will give sufficient power to police officials and enhance the security of the state.
- It will also help control cybercrime and narco-terrorism fuelled by terrorist outfits from across the border.

ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES

Ethanol From B-Heavy Molasses

The Union Minister for Environment has declared that no separate environmental clearance is required to produce additional ethanol from B-heavy molasses as it does not contribute to the pollution load.

About:

- With this, sugar mills are expected to undertake production of ethanol from B-heavy Molasses and other by-products/products.
- It has been clarified that all such proposals intended to undertake additional production of ethanol from B-heavy Molasses/Sugar cane juice/ Sugar syrup/ Sugar, may be considered under the provisions of 7 (ii) (a) of EIA Notification, 2006 by the concerned Expert Appraisal Committee for grant of environmental clearance.
- Molasses is a viscous product resulting from refining sugarcane or sugar beets into sugar. Molasses varies by amount of sugar, method of extraction, and age of plant.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC

Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI)

As per the National Health Profile-2019 released by the Union Health Ministry, Acute respiratory infections (ARI) accounted for 69.47% of morbidity in 2018.

About:

- Acute respiratory infections (ARI) accounted for 69.47% of morbidity in 2018 which was the highest in the communicable disease category, leading to 27.21% mortality.
- Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal reported a large number of patients and fatalities due to ARI.
- According to World Health Organisation, Acute respiratory infections (ARI) is a serious ailment that prevents normal breathing function and kills an estimated 2.6 million children annually every year worldwide.

DEFENCE

High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL)

Raksha Rajya Mantri Shripad Naik inaugurated the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) Igniter Complex at High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) in Pune.

About:

- HEMRL is a premier laboratory of DRDO and primarily engages in developing Rocket and Gun Propellants, Pyrotechnic Devices, High Explosive Systems and synthesis of high energy molecules.
- HEMRL has created a state of the art facility for design, processing and evaluation of ignition systems. The facility consists of process, assembly & storage buildings and a design centre.
- Ignition is a crucial and highly critical phenomenon in the ignition chain of Rocket motor. Ignition system for Agni, Prithvi, Akash, Nag, Pinaka, Long Range Surface-to-Air Missile (LRSAM), etc. have been designed and developed in HEMRL.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The key to success is to focus on goals, not obstacles.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: Foreign direct investment (FDI) is a like double edged sword. In this light discuss the positive and negative impact of FDI in India. Also suggest suitable measures to improve FDI in India.

Ans

FDI is an investment made by a firm or an individual into business interest located in other countries. Unlike, portfolio investment the investor in FDI acquire foreign business asset, ownership or controlling interest in foreign company.

- FDI equity inflow in India in 2018-19 stood at \$44 billion. Further, according to UNCTAD's World investment report, India is 10th largest recipient of FDI in world.
- FDI has multiple benefits such as generate technology spill overs, helps human capital formation, contributes to international trade integration, create a more competitive business environment and enhances enterprise development.
- FDI contribute to higher economic growth, which is the strongest tool to alleviate poverty in developing countries.
- Moreover, foreign direct investment may help improve environmental and social conditions in the host country.
- FDI brings in foreign technical expertise that is an important factor in improving the existing technical processes and advances in technology.
- FDI has both backward and forward linkages as create demand for local goods and create jobs and increase employment in the target country.

However, some economists have also criticized FDI on various grounds due to its negative impact, such as:

- FDI occasionally hamper domestic investment, as it focuses resources elsewhere.
- FDI impacts exchange rates to the advantage of one country and the disadvantage of the other nation.
- FDI creates culture of dependency on the foreign capital and may impact sovereignty of the nation.
- The FDI has sometimes led to large outflow of capital in form of repatriation, dividend payment and royalties
- Overall FDI has a positive impact on the economy therefore there is a need to adopt following steps:
 - Adopting favorable policy regime and robust business environment.
 - There is also a need for improving regulatory regime and promoting further FDI relaxation.

The best practice in form of establishing Investment Facilitation Cell like- Japan cell and Korea cell need to be further strengthened.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs

1. With reference to the 'Universal Postal Union', consider the following statements:

1. It is a specialized agency of the United Nations.
2. Its headquarter is located in the Hague, Netherlands.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) **1 only**
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

2. With reference to the ethanol from B-heavy molasses, consider the following statements:

1. Separate environmental clearance is required to produce additional ethanol from B-heavy molasses.
2. Molasses is a viscous product resulting from refining sugarcane or sugar beets into sugar.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) **2 only**
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) is a premier laboratory of DRDO and primarily engages in developing Rocket and Gun Propellants, Pyrotechnic Devices, High Explosive Systems and synthesis of high energy molecules. It is located in:

- (a) **Pune**
- (b) Delhi
- (c) Chennai
- (d) Nagpur

4. With reference to the National Hydrology Project (NHP), consider the following statements:

1. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, being implemented by Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation with support from World Bank.
2. The project has a coverage on Pan India basis and intends to set up of a system for timely and reliable water resources data acquisition, storage, collation, management and dissemination.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) **Both 1 and 2**
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2