

**GOVERNANCE****Mega Food Park Scheme**

Recently, the Union Minister for Food Processing Industries virtually inaugurated the Indus Best Mega Food Park at Raipur, Chhattisgarh. It is built under the Mega Food Park Scheme. By this food park, about 5000 people will get employment and about 25000 farmers will be benefited.

**Key Points****About:**

- It was launched in 2008-09 to give a major boost to the food processing sector by adding value and reducing food wastage at each stage of the supply chain with a particular focus on perishables. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries is implementing the Mega Food Park Scheme in the country.
- Mega Food Parks create modern infrastructure facilities for food processing along the value chain from farm to market with strong forward and backward linkages through a cluster-based approach.

**Aim:** To provide a mechanism to link agricultural production to the market by bringing together farmers, processors and retailers so as to ensure maximizing value addition, minimizing wastage, increasing farmers income and creating employment opportunities particularly in the rural sector.

**Approach:** The Scheme is based on the "Cluster" approach and envisages creation of state of art support infrastructure in a well-defined agri/horticultural zone for setting up of modern food processing units in the industrial plots provided in the park with a well-established supply chain.

**Components:** A Mega food Park typically consists of supply chain infrastructure including collection centers (cc), primary processing centers (ppc) central processing centers (cpc), cold chain and around 25-30 fully developed plots for entrepreneurs to set up food processing units.

**Financial Assistance:**

- The central government provides financial assistance upto Rs. 50 Crore per Mega Food Park (MFP) project.
- The MFP project is implemented by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) which is a Body Corporate registered under the Companies Act, 2013. SPV is a subsidiary company that is formed to undertake a specific business purpose or activity.

**Present Status:** Presently, 22 Mega Food Parks are operational. It is in line with the 'Make in India' and 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' vision of the Government of India.

**GEOGRAPHY****Devika River Project: J&K**

Recently, the Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region has asked for suggestions for the Devika River project in Udhampur, J&K. This project is compared with the Namami Gange Project.

**Key Points****About:**

- This is a Rs. 190 crore Project.
- The work on the project was started in March 2019 under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP).
- Under the project, bathing "ghats" (places) on the banks of the Devika River will be developed, encroachments will be removed, natural water bodies will be restored and catchment areas will be developed along with cremation ground.
- The project includes the construction of three sewage treatment plants, sewerage network of 129.27 km, development of two cremation ghats, protection fencing and landscaping, small hydropower plants and three solar power plants.
- On completion of the project, the rivers will see reduction in pollution and improvement in water quality.

**About Devika River:**

Devika river originates from the hilly Suddha Mahadev temple in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir and flows down towards western Punjab (now in Pakistan) where it merges with the Ravi river.

The river holds religious significance as it is revered by Hindus as the sister of river Ganga.

In June 2020, Devika Bridge was inaugurated in Udhampur. Apart from taking care of traffic congestion, the Devika Bridge was also meant to help smooth passage of Army convoys and vehicles.

**National River Conservation Plan****About:**

- National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) is a centrally funded scheme launched in 1995 aimed at preventing the pollution of rivers.

- Programs for river conservation are being implemented under National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) and NGRBA (National Ganga River Basin Authority).

**Activities under NRCP:**

- Interception and Diversion works to capture the raw sewage flowing into the river through open drains and divert them for treatment.
- Sewage Treatment Plants for treating the diverted sewage.
- Low Cost Sanitation works to prevent open defecation on riverbanks.
- Electric Crematoria and Improved Wood Crematoria to conserve the use of wood and help in ensuring proper cremation of bodies brought to the burning ghats.
- River Front Development works such as improvement of bathing ghats.
- Public awareness and public participation.
- Human Resource Development (HRD), capacity building, training and research in the area of River Conservation.
- Other miscellaneous works depend upon location specific conditions including the interface with human population.

**2.Black Carbon and Glacier Melting**

The report titled “Glaciers of the Himalayas: Climate Change, Black Carbon and Regional Resilience” says that the glaciers are melting faster than the global average ice mass. However, the strong policy on black carbon can sharply cut glacier melt. The research report is released by the World Bank and covers the Himalaya, Karakoram, and Hindu Kush (HKHK) mountain ranges.

**Black Carbon**

- Black carbon is a kind of an aerosol. An aerosol is a suspension of fine solid particles or liquid droplets in the air.
- Among aerosols (such as brown carbon, sulphates), Black Carbon (BC) has been recognized as the second most important anthropogenic agent for climate change and the primary marker to understand the adverse effects caused by air pollution.
- It gets emitted from gas and diesel engines, coal-fired power plants, and other sources that burn fossil fuel. It comprises a significant portion of particulate matter or PM, which is an air pollutant.

**HKHK Mountain Region:**

- HKHK Region spans eight countries; Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, China, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar and also has some of the world’s tallest mountains including Mt. Everest and K2.
- HKHK Glaciers feed into river systems including Ganga, Yangtze, Irrawaddy, and Mekong. The water that runs down from glaciers feeds the agriculture, on which nearly 2 billion people are dependent upon.
- HKHK Region, also known as the third pole, along with China’s Tien Shan Mountains holds most ice outside the North and the South Pole.

**Key Points**

**About Black Carbon:**

- BC is a short-lived pollutant that is the second-largest contributor to warming the planet behind carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Unlike other greenhouse gas emissions, BC is quickly washed out and can be eliminated from the atmosphere if emissions stop. Unlike historical carbon emissions it is also a localised source with greater local impact.

**Source of Black Carbon in Himalayan Region:**

- Industry (primarily brick kilns) and residential burning of solid fuel together account for 45-66% of regional anthropogenic (man-made) BC deposition, followed by on-road diesel fuels (7-18%) and open burning (less than 3% in all seasons) in the region.

**Impact of Deposits of BC:**

- It acts in two ways hastening the pace of glacier melt:
  1. By decreasing surface reflectance of sunlight.
  2. By raising the air temperature.

**Rate of De-glaciation:**

- The rate of retreat of HKHK glaciers is estimated to be 0.3 metres per year in the west to 1.0 metre per year in the east.
- Full implementation of current policies to mitigate BC can achieve a 23% reduction but enacting new policies and incorporating them through regional cooperation among countries can achieve

enhanced benefits. National Mission on Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE) is one such policy adopted in India. It is one of the eight missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).

- BC deposits can be sharply reduced through new, currently feasible policies by an additional 50% from current levels.

**Impact of Glacier Melt:**

- Glacier melt produces flash floods, landslips, soil erosion, and glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF).
- In the short run, the higher volumes of melt water could replace receding groundwater downstream. But in the long run, decreased water availability would aggravate water shortage.

**Measures to be Taken:**

- In the Himalayas, reducing black carbon emissions from cookstoves, diesel engines, and open burning would have the greatest impact and could significantly reduce radiative forcing and help to maintain a greater portion of Himalayan glacier systems. Radiative forcing is a measure of the change in energy balance as a result of a change in a forcing agent (e.g., greenhouse gases, aerosol, cloud, and surface albedo) to affect the global energy balance and contribute to climate change.

**Steps to be Taken by Regional Governments:**

- Review the policies on water management, with an emphasis on basin-based regulation and use of price signals (value of a particular action) for efficiency.
- Careful planning and use of hydropower to reflect changes in water flows and availability.
- Increasing the efficiency of brick kilns through proven technologies.
- There must also be greater knowledge sharing in the region.

**SOCIAL ISSUE**

**Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine Initiative**

Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment virtually launched the SAGE (Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine) initiative and SAGE portal for elderly persons. An amount of Rs. 100 crore has been assigned for the promotion of the silver economy.

**Silver Economy**

- Silver economy is the system of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services aimed at using the purchasing potential of older and ageing people and satisfying their consumption, living and health needs.
- The silver economy is analyzed in the field of social gerontology (study of aging) not as an existing economic system but as an instrument of ageing policy and the political idea of forming a potential, needs-oriented economic system for an aging population.
- Its main element is gerontechnology (Technology pertaining to aged people) as a new scientific, research and implementation paradigm.

**Key Points**

**About:**

- The SAGE portal will be a “one-stop access” of elderly care products and services by credible start-ups.
- It has been launched with a view to help such persons who are interested in entrepreneurship in the field of providing services for elderly care.
- The SAGE project aims to identify, evaluate, verify, aggregate, and deliver products, solutions and services directly to the stakeholders. The Ministry will act as a facilitator, enabling the elderly to access the products through identified start-ups.

**Features:**

- Start-ups can apply for being a part of SAGE through a dedicated portal.
- The start-ups selected under SAGE will be those which will provide new innovative products and services to elderly persons in various areas like health, travel, finance, legal, housing, food among others.
- An allocation of Rs. 25 crores has been made for the SAGE project in the current financial year i.e 2021-22.

**Need for the Initiative:** The share of elders, as a percentage of the total population in the country, is expected to increase from around 7.5% in 2001 to almost 12.5% by 2026, and surpass 19.5% by 2050.

**Other Government Initiatives for Elderly people:**

- **Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP):**The main objective of the scheme is to improve the quality of life of older persons by providing basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and entertainment opportunities, etc.
- **Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY):**This is a central sector scheme funded from the Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund. The fund was notified in the year 2016.It aims to provide aids and assistive living devices to senior citizens belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) category who suffer from age-related disabilities such as low vision, hearing impairment, loss of teeth and locomotor disabilities.
- **Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY):**PMVVY was launched in May 2017 to provide social security during old age.It is a pension scheme for senior citizens that comes with guaranteed returns on monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or on an annual basis for a period of 10 years. It is exclusively available to those who are 60 years of age and above.
- **Vayoshreshtha Samman:**
  1. Conferred as a National award, and given to eminent senior citizens & institutions under various categories for their contributions on International day of older persons on 1st October.
  2. Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (MWPSA) Act, 2007:
  3. To ensure need-based maintenance for Parents and Senior Citizens and their welfare.

### BIODIVERSITY AND ENVIRONMENT

#### **Bamboo Market Window on GeM Portal**

Recently, the government of India has dedicated a window 'The Green Gold Collection' on the GeM (Government e-Marketplace) portal for the marketing of Bamboo Goods.This window is the collective work of the National Bamboo Mission (NBM) and GeM.

#### **Key Points**

##### **About:**

- It showcases a range of exquisitely handcrafted bamboo and bamboo products, handicrafts, disposals and office utility products on the GeM portal.
- It aims to provide bamboo artisans, weavers and entrepreneurs in rural areas with market access to Government buyers.
- It seeks to promote the adoption and use of bamboo products among Government buyers and usher a sustainable rural economy for an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

##### **National Bamboo Mission:**

- **Launch:**The restructured NBM was launched in 2018-19 for the holistic development of the complete value chain of the bamboo sector and is being implemented in a hub & spoke model."Hub & Spoke" model wherein the Mentor Institution, called the "Hub" is centralized and will have the responsibility of guiding the Mentee institution through the secondary branches the "Spoke" i.e. through the services provided to the mentee for self improvement.
- **Objectives:**Connecting farmers to markets so as to enable farmer producers to get a ready market for the bamboo grown and to increase the supply of appropriate raw material to the domestic industry.It also endeavours to upgrade skills of traditional bamboo craftsmen as per the requirement of contemporary markets with a tie-up with enterprises and premier institutes.
- **Nodal Ministry:**Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

##### **Government e-Marketplace:**

- **About:**
  1. GeM is a one-stop National Public Procurement Portal to facilitate online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Central and State Government Departments/Organizations /Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
  2. The procurement of goods and services by Ministries and the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) is mandatory for goods and services available on GeM.
  3. It also provides the tools of e-bidding and reverse e-auction to facilitate the government users achieve the best value for their money.
  4. At present, GeM has more than 30 lakh products, over Rs. 10 lakh crore worth of transactions have happened so far at the portal.
- **Launch:**It was launched in 2016 to bring transparency and efficiency in the government buying process.
- **Nodal Ministry:**Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

##### **Bamboo**

- 18th September is observed as World Bamboo Day by the World Bamboo Organisation.

- India is the world's second-largest cultivator of bamboo after China, with 136 species and 23 genera spread over 13.96 million hectares, according to the State of Environment report 2018.
- Green Gold, as bamboo is often known, is found everywhere in India.
- Known as 'poor man's timber', bamboo is omnipresent in tribal cultures and community living. Rural communities engage with bamboo handicrafts, textiles, artifacts, and household utilities. Examples include Tripura bamboo silks, heritage cuisines with roasted and pickled bamboo shoots, cultural symbols like the Assamese 'Jaapi' (made of bamboo, cane, and palm), widely popular bamboo tree houses, machans, besides modern sustainable architectural concepts and musical instruments.
- Initiatives Taken: National Bamboo Mission, Bamboo Clusters, Removal of Bamboo from 'Tree' Category (Indian Forest Act 1927 was amended in 2017),

### IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM

#### Blue-finned Mahseer

Recently, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has moved Blue-finned Mahseer from Endangered to the Least Concern' status on its Red List.

#### **Key Points**

**About:** The Mahseer belongs to the genus Tor, of which there are several subspecies to be found in India and in other range countries in South Asia. The Blue-finned Mahseer or Tor Khudree is one of the subspecies of the Mahseer.

**Habitat:** Mainly found in the Mota Mola river east of Pune. This species is also found in other rivers of the Deccan Plateau. The species is migratory; moving upstream during rains. It prefers clean, fast flowing and well oxygenated waters.

**Threats:** Threatened by habitat manipulation, over harvesting and competition from other fish species.

#### **Significance:**

- **Freshwater Ecosystem Indicator:** It is very sensitive to dissolved oxygen levels, water temperature and sudden climatic changes. It just cannot bear pollution.
- **Cultural:** They have cultural and religious significance as well as they are protected in 'temple sanctuaries' across India.

**Conservation Initiatives:** Tata Power (private company) is involved in conservation of the blue-finned for 50 years in Lonavala (near Pune), Maharashtra.

#### **Protection status:**

- IUCN Red List: Least Concern

#### **International Union for Conservation of Nature**

#### **About:**

- IUCN is a membership union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations.
- Created in 1948, it is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it. It is headquartered in Switzerland.

#### **The Red List:**

- The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, is the world's most comprehensive inventory of the global conservation status of plant and animal species.
- It divides species into nine categories: Not Evaluated, Data Deficient, Least Concern, Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, Extinct in the Wild and Extinct.
- It is recognized as the most authoritative guide to the status of biological diversity.

### DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

**Qns. Corporate social responsibility envisages ethical corporate governance. Discuss.**

**Ans:**

#### **Introduction**

The term corporate social responsibility (CSR) refers to practices and policies undertaken by corporations that are intended to have a positive influence on the world. The key idea behind CSR is for corporations to pursue other pro-social objectives, in addition to maximizing profits.

Examples of common CSR objectives include minimizing environmental externalities, promoting volunteerism among company employees, and donating to charity.

#### **Body**

#### **Corporate social responsibility & Corporate Governance linkage**

- **Self-Regulating Model:** Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a self-regulating business model that helps a company be socially accountable—to itself, its stakeholders, and the public.
- **Corporate Citizenship:** By practicing corporate social responsibility, also called corporate citizenship, companies can be conscious of the kind of impact they are having on all aspects of society, including economic, social, and environmental.
- **Improved Work Culture:** CSR activities can help forge a stronger bond between employees and corporations, boost morale and help both employees and employers feel more connected with the world around them.
- **Win-Win Condition:** Many companies view CSR as an integral part of their brand image, believing that customers will be more likely to do business with brands that they perceive to be more ethical.

### Conclusion

In India the Corporate social responsibility is defined under the Companies Act 2013, that can take many forms depending on the company and industry. Through CSR programs, philanthropy, and volunteer efforts, businesses can benefit society while boosting their brands. Thus, as important as CSR is for the community, it is equally valuable for a company.

### DAILY QUIZ

Q1. Consider the following statements about SWAMIH Fund:

1. The fund was set up as a Category-II AIF (Alternate Investment Fund) debt fund registered with RBI.
2. The Sponsor of the Fund is the Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

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

Q2. With reference to PM-Kisan scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is a central sector scheme with 100 per cent funding from the Government of India.
2. Landholding farmer's families with cultivable landholding in their names can apply under this scheme.
3. The Common Service Centres (CSCs) have been authorized to do the registration of the farmers for the Scheme upon payment of fees.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3**

Q3. With reference to Red-eared slider, consider the following statements

1. It is the most invasive turtle.
2. It is the most commonly traded species of turtle in the world.
3. It is the most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only**
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Q4. Which of the following is the most appropriate analogy with regards to the relationship between a "Protected area" and the "Biosphere"?

- a. A tree in a forest**
- b. Core and Mantle of the Earth
- c. Ionosphere
- d. Mesosphere

Q5. If you travel by road from Amaravati to Leh, what is the minimum number of States within India through which you can travel, including the origin and the destination?

- a. 5**
- b. 6
- c. 7
- d. 8