

INTERNATIONAL RELATION**Permanent Indus Commission Meeting**

The 117th Meeting of Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) between India and Pakistan was held. Earlier, the Central government has decided to adopt a new criterion for selecting members of the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB).

What are the Highlights of the Meeting?

- Both sides discussed the exchange of hydrological and flood data during which the Indian side underscored that all its projects are fully compliant with the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty.
- The issue of the Fazilka drain was also discussed and Pakistan assured that all necessary action will continue to be taken to ensure the free flow of Fazilka drain into the river Sutlej.
 1. Fazilka drain is one of 22 drains and water bodies, where untreated water of Malwa district (Punjab, India) is discharged.
 2. The drain is closed at the borderline of countries, leading to stagnation in the shape of ponds and deterioration of quality of groundwater in the border area.
- Technical discussions were held regarding ongoing projects including Pakal Dul, Kiru and Lower Kalnai.
 1. The Pakal Dul Hydro Electric Project (1000 MW) is proposed on river Marusudar, a tributary of Chenab river in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.
 2. Kiru Hydro Electric Project (624 MW) is proposed on River Chenab, located in Kishtwar district of Jammu & Kashmir.
 3. Lower Kalnai project is a hydroelectric power project in the Doda and Kishtwar districts of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The Indian side explicitly conveyed that as an upper riparian State, India has been providing information on extraordinary discharges of water from reservoirs and flood flows every year, as mandated under the treaty.

What is the History of the Indus Waters Treaty?

- The Indus river basin has six rivers- Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej, originating from Tibet and flowing through the Himalayan ranges to enter Pakistan, ending in the south of Karachi.
- In 1947, the line of partition, aside from delineating geographical boundaries for India and Pakistan, also cut the Indus river system into two. Both the sides were dependent on water from the Indus river basin to keep their irrigation infrastructure functional and therefore, equitable distribution was needed.
- Initially, the Inter-dominion accord of May, 1948 was adopted, where both countries, after meeting for a conference, decided that India would supply water to Pakistan in exchange for an annual payment made by the latter. This agreement however, soon disintegrated as both the countries could not agree upon its common interpretations.
- In 1951, in the backdrop of the water-sharing dispute, both the countries applied to the World Bank for funding of their respective irrigation projects on Indus and its tributaries, which is when the World Bank offered to mediate the conflict.
- Finally in 1960, after nearly a decade of fact-finding, negotiation, proposals by the World Bank and amendments to them, an agreement was reached between the two countries, and the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) was signed by former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and then President of Pakistan, Ayub Khan.

What are Some of its Key Provisions?**Sharing Water:**

- The treaty prescribed how water from the six rivers of the Indus River System would be shared between India and Pakistan.
- It allocated the three western rivers—Indus, Chenab and Jhelum—to Pakistan for unrestricted use, barring certain non-consumptive, agricultural and domestic uses by India and the three Eastern rivers—Ravi, Beas and Sutlej—were allocated to India for unrestricted usage. This means that 80% of the share of water or about 135 Million Acre Feet (MAF) went to Pakistan, while leaving the rest 33 MAF or 20% of water for use by India.

Permanent Indus Commission:

- It also required both the countries to establish a Permanent Indus Commission constituted by permanent commissioners on both sides.

Rights over Rivers:

- While Pakistan has rights over the waters of Jhelum, Chenab and Indus, Annexure C of the IWT allows India certain agricultural uses, while Annexure D allows it to build 'run of the river' hydropower projects, meaning projects not requiring live storage of water.

Design Specifications:

- It also provides certain design specifications which India has to follow while developing such projects.

Raising Objections:

- The treaty also allows Pakistan to raise objections over such projects being built by India, if it does not find them to be compliant with the specifications.
- India has to share information on the project design or alterations made to it with Pakistan, which is required to respond with objections, if any, within three months of receipt.
- Besides, India is allowed to have a minimum storage level on the western rivers – meaning it can store up to 3.75 MAF of water for conservation and flood storage purposes.

Dispute Resolution Mechanism:

- The IWT also provides a three step dispute resolution mechanism, under which “questions” on both sides can be resolved at the Permanent Commission, or can also be taken up at the inter-government level.
- In case of unresolved questions or “differences” between the countries on water-sharing, such as technical differences, either side can approach the World Bank to appoint a Neutral Expert (NE) to come to a decision. And eventually, if either party is not satisfied with the NE’s decision or in case of “disputes” in the interpretation and extent of the treaty, matters can be referred to a Court of Arbitration.

What about Geopolitical Conflicts?

- In recent years, the Indus Water Treaty has been brought up a couple of times during geo-political tension between India and Pakistan.
- In the aftermath of the attack on J&K’s Uri army camp in 2016, India said that “Blood and water cannot flow simultaneously,” soon after which, the Permanent Indus Commission talks were suspended for that year by the Indian side, which also at one point threatened to walk out of the treaty.
- Again in 2019, when the suicide attack was carried out in Pulwama, killing 40 CRPF personnel, India had for the first time threatened to cut off water supply to Pakistan from the Indus River System.
- Later it was clarified that restricting Pakistan’s supply would be in violation of the IWT, and required consideration of the Centre’s top officials. IWT does not have a unilateral exit provision, and is supposed to remain in force unless both the countries ratify another mutually agreed pact.

What is the Permanent Indus Commission?

- It is a bilateral commission of officials from India and Pakistan, created to implement and manage goals of the Indus Waters Treaty, 1960.
- The Commission, according to the treaty, shall meet regularly at least once a year, alternately in India and Pakistan.
- The functions of the Commission include:
 1. To study and report to the two Governments on any problem relating to the development of the waters of the rivers.
 2. To solve disputes arising over water sharing.
 3. To arrange technical visits to projects’ sites and critical river head works.
 4. To undertake, once in every five years, a general tour of inspection of the Rivers for ascertaining the facts.
 5. To take necessary steps for the implementation of the provisions of the treaty.

2. War Crimes

Recently, the International Criminal Court (ICC) has announced that it will open an investigation into possible war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. There are specific international standards for war crimes.

What is the International Criminal Court?

- It is a permanent judicial body created by the 1998 Rome Statute of the ICC (its founding and governing document), and began functioning on 1st July 2002 when the Statute came into force.
- Headquarter: The Hague, Netherlands
- Members:
 1. 123 nations are States Parties to the Rome Statute and recognise the ICC’s authority.
 2. The USA, China, Russia, and India are not the members.
- The forum was established as a court of last resort to prosecute offences that would otherwise go unpunished, and has jurisdiction over four main crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression.

What are War Crimes?

- War crimes are defined as serious violations of humanitarian laws during a conflict.
- The definition, established by the Rome Statute of the ICC, is derived from the 1949 Geneva Conventions.
- It is based on the idea that individuals can be held liable for the actions of a state or its military.
- The taking of hostages, willful killings, torture or inhuman treatment of prisoners of war, and forcing children to fight are some of the more obvious examples.

What are the Geneva Conventions (1949)?

- The Geneva Conventions (1949) and their Additional Protocols are international treaties that contain the most important rules limiting the barbarity of war.
- They protect people who do not take part in the fighting (civilians, medics, aid workers) and those who can no longer fight (wounded, sick and shipwrecked troops, prisoners of war).
 1. The first Geneva Convention protects wounded and sick soldiers on land during war.
 2. The second Geneva Convention protects wounded, sick and shipwrecked military personnel at sea during war.
 3. The third Geneva Convention applies to prisoners of war.
 4. The fourth Geneva Convention affords protection to civilians, including in occupied territory.
- India is a party to the Geneva Convention.

What is Criteria for War Crimes?

- **Criteria:** To decide whether an individual or a military has committed a war crime, international humanitarian law lays down three principles:
 1. **Distinction:** It is illegal to target objectives that are “expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objectives, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.
 2. **Proportionality:** Proportionality prohibits armies from responding to an attack with excessive violence. For example: If a soldier is killed, for example, you cannot bomb an entire city in retaliation.
 3. **Precaution:** It requires parties to a conflict to avoid or minimise the harm done to the civilian population.
- **Gray Area in Definition:** Raids on a cities or villages, bombing residential buildings or schools, and even the killing of groups of civilians do not necessarily amount to war crimes — not if their military necessity is justified.
 1. The same act can become a war crime if it results in unnecessary destruction, suffering and casualties that exceed the military gain from the attack.
 2. Further, Civilian and military populations have become increasingly hard to distinguish

What is the difference between War Crimes & Crimes Against Humanity?

- The United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (or Genocide convention) separates war crimes from genocide and crimes against humanity.
- War crimes are defined as occurring in a domestic conflict or a war between two states.
- While genocide and crimes against humanity can happen in peacetime or during the unilateral aggression of a military towards a group of unarmed people.

GOVERNANCE

Sagar Parikrama

The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying will inaugurate the ‘Sagar Parikrama’ to know the problems of Coastal Fisher folk.

What is Sagar Parikrama?

- It is a navigation journey to be conducted in all coastal states/UTs through a pre-decided sea route to demonstrate solidarity with all fisherfolk, fish farmers and concerned stakeholders.
- It is envisioned as a part of ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava’ saluting our great freedom fighters, sailors and fishers.
- The Parikrama will start from Mandvi, Gujarat in Ist phase and will be organised in other districts of Gujarat and other State/UTs in subsequent phases.
 1. The first leg of ‘Sagar Parikrama’ shall start on 5th March 2022 from Mandvi and end at Porbandar on 6th March 2022.
 2. The entire distance will be covered from the coastline of Mandvi on the coast of the Arabian Sea in the Kutch district of Gujarat, situated at the estuary where the river Rukmavati meets the Gulf of Kutch.
 3. The Rukmavati River is a south flowing river originating in the central Kutch District and empties into the Arabian Sea

- It will also conduct interaction programmes with fishermen, fisher communities and stakeholders in these locations and districts in order to know the problems of Coastal Fisher folk.
- It is envisaged in the sea across the coastal belt demonstrating solidarity with all fisher folk, fish farmers and concerned stakeholders as a spirit of Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

What is Significance?

- It will focus on sustainable balance between the utilisation of marine fisheries resources for food security of the nation and livelihoods of coastal fisher communities and protection of marine ecosystems.
- Oceans are vital to the economies, security and livelihoods of Indian coastal states. The Country has a coastline of 8118km, covering 9 maritime States/4UTs and providing livelihood support to millions of coastal fisher folk.

What is the Scenario of the Fisheries Sector in India?

- India is the second major producer of fish through aquaculture in the world.
- India is the 4th largest exporter of fish in the world as it contributes 7.7% to the global fish production.
- Currently, this sector provides livelihood to more than 2.8 crore people within the country. Nevertheless, this is a sector with untapped potential.
- The fisheries sector has demonstrated double-digit average annual growth of 10.87 % since 2014-15 with record fish production of 145 lakh tons during 2020-21 as per the Economic Survey for 2021-22
- Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture sector registering an average annual growth of 7.53% during the last 5 years. The country exported 12.89 lakh metric tons of fisheries products valued at Rs 46,662 crore (USD 6.68 billion) during 2019-20.
- Despite challenges pertaining to infrastructure, the measures by the Central government in the past recent years ensured that the fisheries sector continued to register an annual growth rate of more than 10%.

What are the Initiatives related to Fisheries?

1. Fishing Harbours
2. Seaweed Park
3. Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana
4. Palk Bay Scheme
5. Marine Fisheries Bill
6. Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)
7. Kisan Credit Card (KCC)
8. Marine Products Export Development Authority

PRELIMS FACT

Decline in Investments Through P-Notes

According to Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) data, the value of Participatory-Note (P-Notes) investments in Indian markets have declined in Jan 2022 in comparison to Dec 2021.

What are the Reasons for Declining P-Note?

- This is in line with expectations as foreign investors were aggressive sellers throughout January 2022 continuing the trend seen since October 2021.
- With Omicron fears largely behind, investors were hopeful of a rapid recovery in the global economy. However, with the US Federal Reserve taking a 'faster and sooner' stance on rate hikes investors have been cutting their holdings in risk assets across the board
- The Ukraine geopolitical situation has put further pressure on already scared global investors. It is expected that FPIs (Foreign Portfolio Investors) will continue their net negative stance till clarity emerges on an end to the Ukraine situation.

What is a Participatory Note?

- P-notes are Offshore Derivative Instruments (ODIs) issued by registered Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) to overseas investors who wish to be a part of the Indian stock markets without registering themselves directly.
 1. P-notes have Indian stocks as their underlying assets.
 2. FPIs are non-residents who invest in Indian securities like shares, government bonds, corporate bonds, etc.
- Though P-note holders have less stringent registration requirements, they have to go through a proper due diligence process of the SEBI.

What is Foreign Portfolio Investment?

- FPI involves holding financial assets from a country outside of the investor's own.
- Holdings can include stocks, GDRs (Global Depository Receipt), bonds, mutual funds, and exchange traded funds. A GDR is a bank certificate issued in more than one country for shares in a foreign company
- Along with FDI (Foreign Direct Investment), FPI is one of the common ways for investors to participate in an overseas economy, especially retail investors.
- Unlike FDI, FPI consists of passive ownership, investors have no control over ventures or direct ownership of property or a stake in a company.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns. The transformation of Indian agriculture towards chemical free, natural farming needs a structured a roadmap with government as an active partner to generate demand, sustain production and manage supply chains. Discuss. (250 words)

Introduction

Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) is a set of farming methods, and also a grassroots peasant movement, which has spread to various states in India. It has attained wide success in southern India, especially the southern Indian state of Karnataka where it first evolved. The movement in Karnataka state was born out of collaboration between Mr Subhash Palekar, who put together the ZBNF practices, and the state farmers association Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS).

Body**About Zero budget natural farming**

- The “four wheels” of ZBNF are ‘Jiwamrita’, ‘Bijamrita’, ‘Mulching’ and ‘Waaphasa’.
- Jiwamrita is a fermented mixture of cow dung and urine (of desi breeds), jaggery, pulses flour, water and soil from the farm bund. This isn’t a fertiliser, but just a source of some 500 crore micro-organisms that can convert all the necessary “non-available” nutrients into “available” form.
- Bijamrita is a mix of desi cow dung and urine, water, bund soil and lime that is used as a seed treatment solution prior to sowing.
- Mulching, or covering the plants with a layer of dried straw or fallen leaves, is meant to conserve soil moisture and keep the temperature around the roots at 25-32 degrees Celsius, which allows the microorganisms to do their job.
- Waaphasa, or providing water to maintain the required moisture-air balance, also achieves the same objective.
- Palekar also advocates the use of special ‘Agniastra’, ‘Bramhastra’ and ‘Neemastra’ concoctions again based on desi cow urine and dung, plus pulp from leaves of neem, white datura, papaya, guava and pomegranates for controlling pest and disease attacks.

Need for a structured roadmap to Natural farming

- ZBNF has innumerable benefits to the farmers.
- ZBNF can also help in prevent over-extraction of groundwater, enable aquifer recharge, and eventually contribute to increasing water table levels.
- Zero budget natural farming requires only 10% water and 10% electricity than what is required under chemical and organic farming.
- It might help to reduce the leaching of nitrogen and phosphorous from the soil into groundwater or surface water, and eventually into rivers and oceans.
- The Finance Minister reaffirmed the Centre’s commitment to natural, chemical-free, organic and zero-budget farming. It is the third time in the last four budget speeches where natural farming finds a mention.
- However, there have been no specific allocations have been made to the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in lieu of Natural farming.
- The currently-operational schemes such as the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana and the National Project on Organic Farming did not find any mention in the budget.

Structured roadmap for ZBNF

- Focus on promoting natural farming in rainfed areas beyond the Gangetic basin where around 50% of India’s farmers in rainfed regions use only a third of the fertilisers per hectare compared to the areas where irrigation is prevalent. The shift to chemical-free farming will be easier in these regions.
- Enabling automatic enrolment of farmers transitioning to chemical-free farming into the government’s crop insurance scheme, PM Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) as any new transitions in agriculture raises farmer’s risks.

- Promoting microenterprises that produce inputs for chemical-free agriculture thereby curbing the lack of readily available natural inputs to farmers.
- Leveraging NGOs and champion farmers who have been promoting and practising sustainable agriculture across the country.
- Beyond evolving the curriculum in agricultural universities, upskill the agriculture extension workers on sustainable agriculture practices.
- Leveraging community institutions for awareness generation, inspiration, and social support.
- The government should facilitate an ecosystem in which farmers learn from and support each other while making the transition.
- Support monitoring and impact studies to ensure an informed approach to scaling up sustainable agriculture.
- Dovetailing the ambition on millet promotion with the aim to promote sustainable agriculture.

Conclusion

The implementation of this project at scale will impact a multitude of stakeholders, and also help India progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations (UN) to facilitate the post-2015 development agenda. Agricultural scientists in India have to rework their entire strategy so that farming is in consonance with nature. The dominant paradigm of chemical-based agriculture has failed and regenerative agriculture is the emerging new science.

DAILY QUIZ

Q1. Consider the following statements about Law Commission of India:

It is neither a constitutional body nor a statutory body.

The recommendations of the commission are not binding on the government.

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

Q2. The quadrilateral security dialogue includes

- 1. Japan
- 2. United States
- 3. Australia

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

Q3. Consider the following statements about Parvatmala Scheme:

- 1. It was announced in the Union Budget for 2022-23 to improve connectivity in hilly areas.
- 2. The scheme is being presently started in regions like Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

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

Q4. Consider the following statements about Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary:

- 1. It is part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.
- 2. It is the only sanctuary of Kerala where sightings of four-horned antelopes have been reported.

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

Q5. The Kabini River is one of the major tributaries of the

- a. River Cauvery**
- b. River Krishna
- c. River Godavari
- d. River Pampa