

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

❖ Context

- According to a parliamentary panel report, reports of the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes** since 2018 are still under process in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and have not been presented to the parliament till date.

❖ Key Highlights

- The parliamentary committee also noted that the **budgetary allocation for the Commission needs to be reviewed** so that its functioning is not made to suffer for lack of funds.
- The panel desires that the **vacancies should be immediately filled**.
- It recommended that necessary action be urgently taken in respect of **annual reports, recruitment of officials and budgetary allocation** for the said Commission.
- The **pending reports include**:
 - A study by the Commission of the **impact of the Indira Sagar Polavaram Project** in Andhra Pradesh on the tribal population
 - A special **report on rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced tribals** because of the Rourkela Steel Plant.

❖ About NCST

- NCST was set up with effect from 19th February 2004 by **amending Article 338** and by **inserting a new article 338A** in the Constitution through the **89th Constitution Amendment Act, 2003**.
- **Status**- Constitutional body.

• Composition:

- It consists of a **Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and 3 other Members** who are appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.
- **At least one member should be a woman.**
- The **Chairperson** has been given the rank of **Union Cabinet Ministers**.
- The **Vice Chairperson** has the rank of a **Minister of State**.
- Other members have the rank of a Secretary to the Government of India.

• Tenure:

- The Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and the other Members **hold office for a term of 3 years**.
- The members are not eligible for appointment for more than two terms.

• Powers & Functions:

- It **oversees the implementation of various safeguards** provided to STs under the Constitution and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.
- **Vested with all the powers of a civil court** while investigating any matter on inquiring into any complaint relating to deprivation of rights and safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes
- To **present to the President, annually** and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, **reports upon the working of those safeguards**.

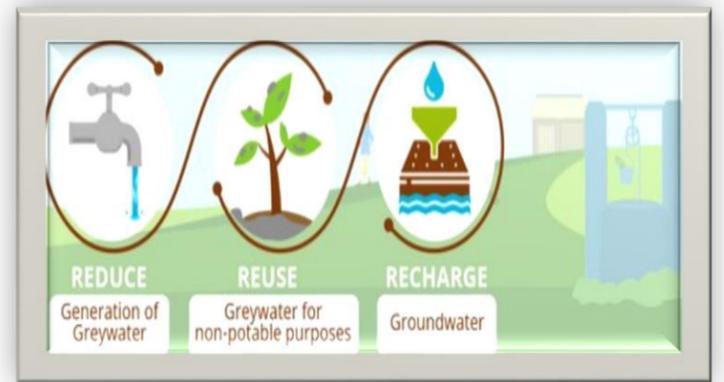
SUJALAM 2.0

❖ Context

- **Ministry of Jal Shakti** launched Sujalam 2.0 campaign for greywater management through people's participation marking **World Water Day on 22nd March**.

❖ Key Highlights

- This year theme of World Water Day is "**Groundwater: making the invisible visible**".
- A Joint Advisory was also signed by 9 Ministries on how greywater management will be taken up at their level based on a convergence model.
 - Ministry of (M/o) Jal Shakti,
 - M/o Rural Development,
 - M/o Women & Child Development,
 - M/o Youth Affairs and Sports,
 - M/o Tribal Affairs,
 - M/o Health and Family Welfare,
 - M/o Education,
 - M/o Environment, Forest and Climate Change and
 - M/o Panchayati Raj
- The campaign would focus on the **creation of institutional level greywater management assets** in Panchayat Ghar, healthcare facilities, schools, anganwadi centres (AWCs), community centres and other government institutions.
- For example - There are about 4.68 lakh kitchen gardens of the total 14 lakh AWCs. The treated greywater can be used to irrigate these kitchen gardens.



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- The treated greywater can be used to recharge the groundwater.
- Under the **Sujlam 1.0 campaign** which was started in August 2021, more than 1 million soak pits were built at household and community level across the country.

❖ Greywater

- Greywater refers to **domestic wastewater** generated in households or office buildings from streams **without faecal contamination**, i.e., all streams except for the wastewater from toilets (**blackwater**).
- Sources of greywater include sinks, showers, baths, washing machines or dishwashers.
- As greywater contains fewer pathogens than domestic wastewater, it is generally safer to handle and easier to treat and reuse onsite for toilet flushing, landscape or crop irrigation, and other non-potable uses.
- It is estimated that **31 billion litres of greywater is generated every day in India**.
- Greywater can be best managed where it is generated and turns into a major management and infrastructure challenge, if it is allowed to accumulate and stagnate.
- **2.2 billion people across the world are facing a water crisis**. **SDG 6** aims to provide universal access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation.

News in Between the Lines

Hypersonic Missiles



❖ Context

- Recently, the **Russian Ministry of Defense** announced that it had **used a hypersonic missile for the first time** in the ongoing conflict with Ukraine.

❖ About Hypersonic Missile

- A hypersonic missile is a **weapon system which flies at least at the speed of Mach 5**.
- Unlike ballistic missiles, **hypersonic missiles do not follow a ballistic trajectory and can be maneuvered to the intended target**.
- The **two types** of hypersonic weapons systems are:
 - **Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGV):**
 - The HGV are launched from a rocket before gliding to the intended target and.
 - **Hypersonic Cruise Missiles:**
 - Hypersonic cruise missiles are powered by air breathing high speed engines or 'scramjets' after acquiring their target.
- **US, Russia and China** are in advanced stages of hypersonic missile programmes.
- **India, France, Germany, Japan and Australia** too are developing hypersonic weapons.
- **Indian hypersonic missile programme:**
 - India is also developing an indigenous, dual capable (conventional as well as nuclear) hypersonic cruise missile as part of its Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle programme.
 - It has successfully **tested a Mach 6 scramjet in June 2019** and September 2020.
 - India operates approximately 12 hypersonic wind tunnels and is capable of testing speeds upto Mach 13.

❖ Context

- A parliamentary standing committee has asked the Food Ministry to make an **"objective assessment"** and find out to **what extent the scheme has helped beneficiaries** and for how long it needs to be continued.

❖ Key Highlights

- Spread over five phases, with a **total allocation of Rs 759.22 lakh tonnes** and financial implication pegged at **Rs 2.68 lakh crore**, the scheme is scheduled to end March 31, 2022.
- The Food Ministry had earlier informed the Standing Committee extension of the scheme beyond March, 2022, would be considered by it "based on the prevailing situation" in the country.

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)

❖ Key Highlights

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❖ About PMGKAY

- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY) is a **scheme as part of Atmanirbhar Bharat** to supply free food grains to migrants and the poor.
- The scheme aimed at providing each person who is covered under the **National Food Security Act 2013** with an **additional 5 kg grains** (wheat or rice) for free, in addition to the **5 kg of subsidized foodgrain already provided** through the Public Distribution System (PDS).
- **Aims:**
 - It aims at **ensuring sufficient food for the poor** and needy during the coronavirus crisis.
- **Nodal Ministry:**
 - Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
- **Beneficiaries:**
 - **Families belonging to the Below Poverty Line** - Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Households (PHH) categories will be eligible for the scheme.
 - **Widows or terminally ill persons or disabled persons or persons aged 60 years** or more or single women or single men with no family or societal support or assured means of subsistence.
 - All primitive **tribal households**.
 - **All eligible Below Poverty Line families of HIV positive persons.**
 - Landless agricultural laborers, marginal farmers, rural artisans/craftsmen such as potters etc.



❖ Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on the occasion of Shaheed Diwas on Wednesday, **virtually inaugurated the Biplobi Bharat Gallery at Victoria Memorial Hall in Kolkata.**

❖ Key Highlights

- The **gallery provides a holistic view of the events** that led to Independence, highlighting the contributions of revolutionaries in the freedom struggle.
- Biplobi Bharat Gallery **depicts the political and intellectual backdrop that triggered the Revolutionary movement.**
- It **showcases the birth of the revolutionary movement**, formation of significant associations by revolutionary leaders, spread of the movement, formation of Indian National Army, contribution of Naval Mutiny, among others.

❖ Context

- Recently, the **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs** approved the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw jute for the 2022-2023 season.

❖ Key Highlights

- The MSP of raw jute has been fixed at **Rs. 4,750 a quintal** for 2022-2023 season.
- It is **Rs. 250 higher** than the previous season.

❖ About MSP

- The MSP is a **minimum price guarantee** that acts as a safety net or insurance for farmers when they sell particular crops.
- These crops are **procured by government agencies** at a promised price to farmers and the MSP cannot be altered in any given situation.
- **A total of 23 crops are procured under MSP.**
- The MSP is set by the central government for selected crops, based on **recommendations it receives from the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).**
- MSP based on a calculation of **at least one-and-a-half (1.5) times** the cost

Biplobi Bharat Gallery



Minimum Support Price (MSP)



World Air Quality Report 2021



of production incurred by the farmers.

- **As of now, CACP recommends MSPs of 23 commodities**, which comprise.
 - 7 cereals (paddy, wheat, maize, sorghum, pearl millet, barley and ragi).
 - 5 pulses (gram, tur, moong, urad, lentil).
 - 7 oilseeds (groundnut, rapeseed-mustard, soyabean, seasmum, sunflower, safflower, niger seed).
 - 4 commercial crops (copra, sugarcane, cotton and raw jute).

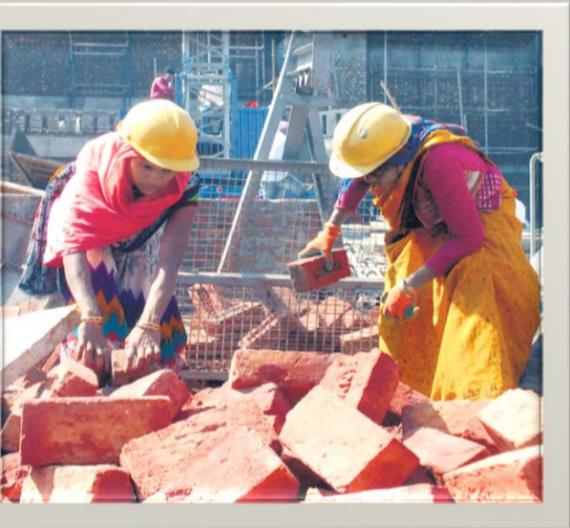
❖ Context

- Report prepared by IQAir, a Swiss air quality technology company.

❖ Key Highlights

- In terms of annual average PM 2.5 levels in 2021, **Delhi ranked as the most polluted out of the 107 capital cities of the world.**
- The city is topping the list for the fourth consecutive year.
- **No city in India met the WHO air quality guideline of 5µg/m³.**
- In 2021, **48% of Indian cities exceeded 50µg/m³** (more than 10 times the WHO limit).
- **35 Indian cities in top 50 of the world's most polluted cities topped by Bhiwadi.** According to the report's executive summary, air pollution is now considered to be the world's largest environmental health threat, accounting for **seven million deaths around the world every year.**
- The estimated **daily economic cost** of air pollution has been figured at \$8 billion (USD), or **3 to 4 % of the gross world product.**
- In India, major sources of air pollution include vehicular emissions, power generation, industrial waste, biomass combustion for cooking, the construction sector, and episodic events like crop burning, noted the report.

12th Periodic Labour Force Survey



❖ Context

- 12th Periodic Labour Force survey released by **National Statistics Office** for the July-Sep 21 quarter.

❖ Key Highlights

- **Unemployment rate** for persons of age 15 years and above in urban areas **dipped to 9.8 per cent in July-September 2021 from 13.2 per cent** in the same quarter of the previous year.
- Unemployment rate in July-Sep 2020 quarter was high due to lockdown restrictions. The National Statistical Office (NSO) launched the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) in **April 2017.**

❖ Key Definitions

- **Labour Force Participation Rate** refers to the **part of the population** which **supplies or offers to supply labour** for pursuing economic activities for the production of goods and services and therefore, **includes both 'employed' and 'unemployed' persons.**
 - Labour force according to current weekly status (CWS) is the number of persons either employed or unemployed on an average in a week of 7 days preceding the date of survey.
- **Working Population** is defined as the **percentage of workers in the population.**
 - The estimate of workforce in the CWS provides the **number of persons who worked for at least 1 hour on any day during the 7 days** preceding the date of survey.
- **Unemployment Rate** is defined as the **percentage of unemployed persons in the labour force.**
 - According to the CWS approach, a person was considered as unemployed in a week if he/she **did not work even for 1 hour on any day** during the reference week but sought or was available for work at least for 1 hour on any day during the reference week.

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Splinternet



❖ Context

- MoS, Electronics & IT, said that sanctions imposed by countries, companies and big tech platforms have shown the emerging two phenomena - **weaponization of internet and splinternet**.

❖ Key Highlights

- Russia's increasing online censorship with Ukraine's intensified calls for Russia to be taken offline could be bringing the world closer to the **"fragmentation of the internet."**
- The splinternet refers to the splintering of cyberspace into **disparate realms controlled by autonomous political blocs or any other controlling power**—such as tech or e-commerce companies, or countries with diverging national interests tied to nationalism or religion.
- **Clyde Wayne Crews**, a researcher at the Cato Institute, **coined the term "splinternet" in 2001** to describe "parallel internets that would be run as distinct, private, and autonomous universes."
- Over the past 15 years, state security concerns and the privatisation of e-commerce have led to **walled-off infrastructure** and **techno-isolationism** separating the internet with geopolitical borders.
- Russia has been pushing forward on plans to create a more sovereign internet for several years.
- **In 2019, Russia enacted a law known as the "sovereign internet" law** to shield the country from what it called the "aggressive nature" of the United States' national cybersecurity strategy.
- The law installed **technological equipment to counter external threats** and allow the Russian network to **track, filter, and reroute** internet traffic.
- Russia has also run tests on its **RUNET intranet** by disconnecting itself entirely from the global internet.

Promoting Exports of GI-Tagged



❖ Context

- **Centre promote exports** of locally sourced **Geographical Indications (GI) tagged agricultural products**, Centre has been striving to identify new products and new export destinations.

❖ Key Highlights

- While Darjeeling Tea and Basmati Rice are the two popular GI-tagged agricultural products of India, which have ready markets across the globe.
- **'Vocal for Local'** and **'Atmanirbhar Bharat'**, the Centre, through **Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority (APEDA)** has been facilitating trial shipments into new markets world wide for products.
- The Government has placed great emphasis on connecting **farmer producer organisations (FPOs), food producer companies (FPCs)** and exporters with international business communities to create an **export hub in Varanasi**, especially for **GI-tagged agricultural products**.
- To promote the unique GI Products from the North Eastern Region, Centre through APEDA has been organising buyer-seller meets, **conducting awareness and capacity building workshops with the participation of representatives of the NER States**, FPOs/FPCs, Exporters, Associations, and Government Departments such as **Indian Railways, AAICLAS, NAFED, DGFT, IIFPT etc.**
- **Potential importing countries** such as UAE, Indonesia, Kuwait Iran, Thailand, Bhutan, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, etc., for the promotion of APEDA scheduled products. Special focus was given on export of GI-tagged products.
- As on date, there are **417 registered GI products** and of them, **around 150 GI tagged products are agricultural and food products**, out of which more than **100 registered GI products fall under the category of APEDA scheduled products** (Cereals, Fresh Fruits and vegetables, etc).

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