Composite Water Management Index 2.0

Why in news?

The composite water management index (CWMI) 2.0 was recently released by the NITI Aayog.

What is the index about?

- The states are ranked across 9 themes and cover 25 states and 2 union territories.
- [It does not include data from West Bengal, Mizoram, Manipur and Jammu & Kashmir.]
- This has been done through a first of its kind water data collection exercise.
- It was done in partnership with the ministry of jal shakti, ministry of rural development and all the states/union territories.

What are the objectives?

- The CWMI is an important tool to assess and improve the performance of states and union territories in efficient management of water resources.
- It is an attempt to create a pan-India set of metrics that measure different dimensions of water management and use across the lifecycle of water.
- The objective of the index is to involve all key stakeholders to understand how states can better manage water resources.
- It provides useful information for the states and for the concerned central ministries/departments.
- This is to enable them to formulate and implement suitable strategies for better management of water resources.

What are the highlights?

- CWMI 2.0 ranks various states for the reference year 2017-18 as against the base year 2016-17.
- Gujarat has retained its first position in the Composite Water Management Index (CWMI) 2.0.
- Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Goa and Karnataka have topped the CWMI 2.0 for 2017-18 among non-Himalayan states.
- Among Himalayan states, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Tripura are on top of the index.

- The report points out that 82% of rural households in India do not have individual piped water supply.
- 163 million live without access to clean water close to their homes.
- Around 80% of the states assessed over the last 3 years have improved their water management scores, with an average improvement of 5.2 points.
- However, 16 out of 27 states still score less than 50 points on the index, out of 100.
- They account for 48% of the population, 40% of agricultural produce and 35% of economic output of India.

What does the index imply?

- States are displaying progress in water management, but the overall performance remains below what is required to tackle the challenges.
- High-performers continue to demonstrate strong water management practices, but low-performers are struggling to cope up.
- By 2030, India's water demand will exceed supply by two times, indicating severe water scarcity in the country.
- In fact, 820 million Indians living in 12 river basins have a per capita water availability close to or lower than 1,000 cubic metres.
- This is notably the official threshold for water scarcity.
- The average all-India per capita water availability is expected to be 1,341 cubic metres by 2025.
- It could touch a low of 1,140 cubic metres by 2050, close to the official water scarcity threshold.

What is the way forward?

- Going forward, states need to build on this momentum, and upgrade their water management practices to show outcomes and not just outputs.
- Areas like agriculture could have a larger impact on saving water along with focusing on low performing states.
- Several disparities exist in water management amongst states.
- Improved knowledge-sharing amongst states can enable them to learn and solidify water management practices across the board.

Source: Economic Times, Financial Express

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