Conservation of Small Rivers

Why in news?

Government of India has taken steps for conservation of water and rejuvenation of small rivers.

What initiatives were taken to conserve small rivers?

- **Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) –** It was launched in 2019 to promote water conservation and water resource management.

JSA Series	Theme	Focus
2021	Catch the Rain - Where it Falls When it Falls	Cover all the blocks of all districts
2022	Catch the Rain - Where it Falls When it Falls	Spring shed management, protection of watershed management etc.,
2023	Source Sustainability for Drinking Water	Special focus on 150 Water Stressed Districts (WSDs) of the country.

- **Five-fold intervention**-
  - Rainwater harvesting & water conservation
  - Enumerating, geo-tagging & making inventory of all water bodies;
  - Preparation of scientific plans for water conservation
  - Setting up Jal Shakti Kendras in all districts
  - Intensive afforestation
  - Awareness generation.
- **Amrit Sarovar Mission**- It was launched in 2022, aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country as a part of celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- **Namami Gange programme**-It was launched in 2014 for integrated rejuvenation of National River Ganga.
- Its tributaries and large numbers of smaller tributaries have been mapped along with their catchment area/ watershed and wetlands.
- A GIS based inventory of small rivers has also been created with additional district wise information.
- **National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)** – It is the Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented for abatement of pollution in identified stretches of rivers in the country, excluding those in Ganga basin.
- It provides financial and technical assistance to the States/Union Territories (UTs) on cost sharing basis.
- **Small River Rejuvenation & Conservation plan**- In this, 19 rivers have been identified & successfully taken up by Uttar Pradesh government.

- Example- River Manorama, River Varuna, River Tedi etc.,
- **Mission Water Conservation**- It is launched to develop actionable framework for gainful utilization of funds.
- It strives to ensure synergies in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) etc.,
- **Mass awareness programs**- To promote water conservation initiatives including rain water harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water various Trainings, Seminars, Workshops, Exhibitions, and Trade Fares etc., are conducted from time to time each year in various parts of the country
- **National Water Awards**- It is constituted under Ministry of Jal Shakthi to recognize the efforts of people and organizations working in water conservation.
- **Weekly Water Heroes Contest**- The objective of the contest is to promote value of water, in general, and for supporting country-wide efforts on water conservation and sustainable development of water resources.

Best practices

- **Vidharbha farmers livelihood project**- Sustaining farmers livelihoods through integrated watershed management and conservation of natural resources.
- **Drought proofing in Maharashtra**- The Government of Maharashtra rolled out the “Gaalmukt Dharan and Gaalyukt Shivar” (GDGS) scheme.
- The objective is to de-silt the waterbodies using excavating machines.The resultant silt was given to farmers free of cost.
- **Low cost irrigation in Andhra Pradesh**- The objective is to produce more crop per drop using judicious water irrigation practices.

Reference

1. PIB | Small rivers

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