Prelim Bits 01-08-2019

PRAGATI

- The PM chaired his 30th interaction through PRAGATI recently.
- It is a multi-purpose, multi-modal platform for "Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation" (**PRAGATI**).
- It is a unique integrating and interactive platform aimed at addressing common man's grievances.
- It also monitors and reviews important programmes and projects of both central and state governments.
- It is incorporated with three latest technologies-
    1. Digital data management,
    2. Video-conferencing and
    3. Geo-spatial technology.
- It is a three-tier system - PMO, Union Government Secretaries, and Chief Secretaries of the States
- PM will hold a monthly interaction with the Government Secretaries and Chief Secretaries through Video-conferencing.
- The system has been designed in-house by the PMO with the help of National Informatics Center (**NIC**).
- It is also a robust system for bringing e-transparency and e-accountability among the key stakeholders.
- In the recent interaction, PM reviews progress of flagship schemes like Ayushman Bharat and Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, PM AwasYojana (Urban) etc.

Global Coalition of the Willing on Pollinators

- Recently **Nigeria** became the 4th African country to join the "Global Coalition of the Willing on Pollinators"
- This Coalition was formed to follow up on the findings of IPBES assessment on Pollinators and Food Production.
- This agreement is a stepping stone to protect pollinators and their habitats.
- The coalition now has 28 signatories including,
    1. 17 European countries,
    2. 5 from Latin America and the Caribbean and

3. 4 from Africa.

- Joining the coalition means adopting the following measures-
- Taking action to protect pollinators and their habitats.
- Sharing experience and lessons learnt in developing and implementing national pollinator strategies.
- Reaching out to seek collaboration with a broad spectrum of stakeholders.
- Developing research on pollinator conservation.
- Supporting and collaborating with each other and those parties that are willing to join the coalition.
- Pollinator-dependent species include several fruits, vegetables, oil crops, which are major sources of nutrients to humans.
- The availability of pollinators helps in crop production in terms of both quantity and quality.
- Protecting pollinators will be important for addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) –
    1. SDG 2 (zero hunger),
    2. SDG 15 (life on land),
    3. SDG 3 (good health and well-being)

IPBES

- The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (**IPBES**) is an independent intergovernmental body.
- The objective is to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Currently has over 130 member States.
- A large number of NGOs, civil society groupings, individual stakeholders, also participate in the meet.
- It found that many of the world's pollinator species are on the decline.

ISRO Technical Liaison Unit (ITLU)

- Recently Union Cabinet has approved setting up of **ITLU** at Moscow, Russia.
- It will enable effective technical coordination for timely interventions on diversified matters with Russia.
- It will support the ongoing bilateral programmes of cooperation in space technology and act on behalf of ISRO.
- It will also helps ISRO's Gaganyaan programme as it requires development of some of the key technologies.
- The Department of Space has already instituted technical liaison units like ITLU at Washington and Paris.
- The cabinet also approved two pacts between the ISRO and space agencies

of Bolivia and Bahrain.

Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) for Fertilizers

- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approves **NBS** rates for Phosphatic and Potassic (**P&K**) fertilizers.
- NBS for Fertilizers is a policy under 'Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers'.
- This will ensure the availability of P&K fertilizers to the farmers on affordable price.
- Under the scheme, a fixed amount of subsidy decided on an annual basis is provided on each grade of subsidized P&K fertilizers, except for Urea.
- The scheme allows the manufacturers, marketers, and importers to fix the MRP of the Phosphatic and Potassic fertilizers at reasonable levels.
- The MRP will be decided considering the domestic and international prices of P&K fertilizers, inventory level in the country and the exchange rates.
- In India, 'Urea' is the only controlled fertilizer and is sold at a statutory notified uniform sale price.
- So, NBS aims at ensuring balanced use of fertilizers, improving the agricultural productivity.
- It will also helps for better returns to the farmers and also promotes the growth of the indigenous fertilizers industry.

Source: PIB, The Indian Express

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