Prelim Bits 03-08-2019

SANKALP Scheme

- Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (**SANKALP**) project focuses on skill development.
- It is programme of 'Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship'.
- It is an outcome oriented project supported by 'World Bank'.
- It aims to implement the mandate of the National Skill Development Mission (**NSDM**).
- It focuses on district level skilling ecosystem through seamless convergence and coordination.
- It has a special focus on decentralised planning and quality improvement.
- It covers the overall skilling ecosystem of both Central & State agencies.
- Four key areas identified under the scheme are,

1. Institutional Strengthening (National,State&District level)
2. Quality Assurance of skill development programs
3. Inclusion of marginalised population in skill development and
4. Expanding Skills through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).

- An award has also launched to promote skill planning at the district level, namely "District Skill Development Plan (DSDP) Awards".

- The key components of this scheme are,

1. **National Skill Certification Body -** An independent body for regulating skill assessment.
2. **Unified National Accreditation board –** A standard registration and accreditation criteria for trainers & training centres.
3. **National Skill Research Division** – It is an independent think tank with an objective to analyse labour markets to help make policies that suit the current trends.
4. **Kaushal Mart** – This is a consolidated Skilling Resource Marketplace which offers a credible platform for an exchange of skilling resources.
5. **Takshila: National Portal for trainers** – This functions as the central archive of information regarding the skill development of Trainers.

Institutions of Eminence (IoE)

- Recently UGC recommends 20 institutions for **IoE**.
- It is the scheme of University Grants Commission (**UGC**).
- Objectives of the scheme are,

1. to provide for higher education leading to excellence and innovations.
2. to engage in areas of specialization to make distinctive contributions to the objectives of the university education system
3. to provide for high quality teaching and research and for the advancement of knowledge and its dissemination through various research programmes.

- It is expected that the selected Institutions will come up in top 500 of the world ranking in 10 years and in top 100 of the world ranking eventually overtime.
- These Institutions shall be provided with greater autonomy,

1. to admit foreign students up to 30% of admitted students;
2. to recruit foreign faculty upto 25% of faculty strength;
3. to offer online courses upto 20% of its programmes;
4. to enter into academic collaboration with top 500 in the world ranking Institutions without permission of UGC.

- The institution will get financial assistance up to Rs. 1000 Crore over the period of five years under this scheme.

Hyperloop

- It is the futuristic transportation system concept, proposed by Elon Musk.

- It envisages pods or capsules travelling at high speeds through low-pressure tubes erected on columns or tunneled underground.
- The system is fully autonomous and sealed, so no driver-related error is anticipated.
- In a sealed environment with almost no air resistance, the pods are expected to reach very high speeds.
- It uses magnetic levitation, and is propelled by a proprietary electric propulsion system.
- Itd motion will not involve contact, so the vehicle will be virtually noiseless.
- It is so far only a concept with no resemblance to any public transport system known to man.

Tarballs in Mumbai’s Beaches

- Tarballs are dark-coloured, sticky balls of oil that form when crude oil floats on the ocean surface.
- They are formed by weathering of crude oil in marine environments.
- They are transported from the open sea to the shores by sea currents and waves.
- They are usually coin-sized and are found strewn on the beaches.
- However, over the years, they have become as big as basketballs and can weigh as high as 6-7 kgs.
- The presence of several tarballs indicate an oil spill.
- They can get stuck to the fishing nets installed in the sea, making it difficult for fishermen to clean.
- It could also affect marine life, especially filter feeders like clams and oysters.
- Tarball pollution is a major concern to global marine ecosystem.
- Microbes such as bacteria and fungi are known to be associated with tarballs.
- They presumably play an important role in tarball degradation and some are potential human and animal pathogens.
- They are difficult to break down, and can therefore travel for hundreds of miles in the sea.
- International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation **(OPRC)** is an international maritime convention establishing measures for dealing with marine oil pollution.

1. It aims at providing a global framework for international cooperation in combating major incidents of Marine Pollution.
2. Parties to the convention are required to establish measures in dealing with pollution incidents either nationally or with other countries.
3. Ships are required to carry a Shipboard Oil Emergency Plans.

Source: PIB, The Indian Expres

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