Prelim Bits 05-10-2019

e-Waste Clinic

- India's first e-waste clinic is going to be setup in Bhopal.
- The clinic would ensure scientific handling and disposal of electronic waste generate from both households and commercial establishments.
- The Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) have signed an MoU to this effect.
- The project would be taken up as a pilot project in Bhopal for three months and will be subsequently replicated across India.
- It has been conceived as per the Solid Waste Management Policy, 2016.

New Strategic Disinvestment Process

- **Strategic Disinvestment -** The sale of substantial portion (50% or more) of the Government shareholding of a central public sector enterprise (CPSE) as the competent authority may determine, along with transfer of management control.
- The Cabinet has approved a new process of strategic disinvestment with a view to expediting privatisation of select PSUs.
- Presently PSUs for strategic sale are identified by NITI Aayog.
- The new process has madeDepartment of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) under the Ministry of Finance, the nodal department for the strategic stake sale.
- Now, NITI Aayog and DIPAM will jointly identify PSUs for strategic disinvestment.
- Also, DIPAM secretary will be a part of Inter-ministerial group on disinvestments.

Derivatives Trade in IFSC

- Based on the recommendations by the Usha Thorat committee on offshore rupee markets, RBI has brought in changes.
- In its monetary policy review, RBI has

i. allowed banks to freely offer foreign exchange prices to non-resident Indians ,
ii. allowed trading on rupee derivatives and settled in foreign currencies in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs)

- These two were the major recommendations of the committee which aimed at bringing the offshore markets to India.
- Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) is India's IFSC much like an offshore market in Singapore, Hong Kong, London, Dubai and New York.

Electric Vehicles Guidelines

- Ministry of Power has recently approved amendments in Electric Vehicles charging guidelines and specifications.
- Under it, Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) nominated as the Central Nodal Agency to facilitate installation of charging infrastructure.
- It envisages at least 1charging station should be available in a grid of 3 Km X 3 Km in the cities and 1 charging station at every 25 Km on both sides of highways/roads.
- Fast Charging Station for long range and/or heavy duty EVs like buses/trucks etc., shall be installed at every 100 Kms.
- **Phases of Development** – It covers cities in two phases for distributed and demonstrated effect.
- Phase I (1-3 years) - All Mega Cities with population of 4 million plus as per census 2011, all existing expressways and highways connecting it.
- Phase II (3-5 years) - State Capitals, UT headquarters
- Further, setting up of Public Charging Stations shall be a de-licensed activity and any individual/entity is free to set up public charging stations.
- The tariff to be charged has also been mentioned in the guidelines.

Microfinance Institutions

- The Reserve Bank of India has raised the lending cap for microfinance institutions to ₹1.25 lakh, against the earlier limit of ₹1 lakh.
- This is mainly to improve credit availability in rural and semi-urban areas.
- RBI has also decided to increase the household income limit for borrowers of non-banking financial companies-micro finance institutions (NBFC-MFIs).
- It has the set the limit as ₹1.25 lakh and ₹2 lakh for rural and urban/semi urban areas.
- **NBFC-MFI** – Based on the recommendation of **Y.H. Malegam committee** recommendation, a separate category of NBFC-MFI was created in 2011.
- The committee was setup to study issues and concerns in the micro finance sector in the wake of the Andhra Pradesh micro finance crisis in 2010.

World Cotton Day

- WTO is organizing World Cotton Day event in collaboration with FAO, UNCTAD, International Trade Centre (ITC) andInternational Cotton Advisory

Committee (ICAC).

- WTO is hosting it at the request of the Cotton – 4 countries - Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali.
- It is to celebrate their official application for the recognition of 7th October as World Cotton Day by the United Nations.
- It is an opportunity for members, the private sector and the international development community to share knowledge and showcase cotton related activities and products.

Source: The Hindu, PIB, Business Standard

