Prelim Bits 12-11-2019

International Seed Treaty

- International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA),is popularly known as the International Seed Treaty.
- It is a comprehensive international agreement, which aims at guaranteeing food security through the conservation, exchange and sustainable use of the world's plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA).
- It also recognizes farmers' rights, subject to national laws to:

1. The protection of traditional knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;
2. The right to equitably participate in sharing benefits arising from the utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.
3. The right to participate in making decisions, at the national level, on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

- The Treaty establishes the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing to facilitate plant germplasm exchanges and benefit sharing through Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA).
- The treaty was negotiated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) and since 2006 has its own Governing Body under the aegis of the FAO.
- The Governing Body is the highest organ of the Treaty and holds biennial meetings.

PPV & FR Act

- Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act is an unique Indian legislation to protect Farmers' Rights and breeder's rights.
- Under this acta farmer is entitled to save, use, sow, resow, exchange, share or sell his farm produce including seed of a variety protected under the PPV&FR Act, 2001 except brand name.
- PPV&FR Act is fully compliant to the International Seed Treaty.

- Under the provisions of PPV&FR Act, 138 farmers/farming communities have been awarded with Plant Genome Saviour Awards.

Credit Rating Agency

- A credit rating agency is a company that assigns credit ratings, which rate a debtor's ability to pay back debt by making timely principal and interest payments and the likelihood of default.
- An agency may rate the creditworthiness of issuers of debt obligations, of debt instruments, and in some cases, of the servicers of the underlying debt, but not of individual consumers.
- The debt instruments rated by CRAs include government bonds, corporate bonds, municipal bonds, preferred stock, and collateralized securities, such as mortgage-backed securities and collateralized debt obligations.

- The issuers of the obligations or securities may be companies, special purpose entities, state or local governments, non-profit organizations, or sovereign nations.
- A credit rating affects the interest rate that a security pays out, with higher ratings leading to lower interest rates.
- Individual consumers are rated for creditworthiness not by credit rating agencies but by consumer reporting agencies or credit reference agencies, which issue credit scores.
- As of now, there are six credit rating agencies registered under Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) namely,

1. CRISIL,
2. ICRA,
3. CARE,
4. SMERA,
5. Fitch India
6. Brickwork Ratings.

- Moody Investors Service is not a registered credit rating under SEBI.

Swachh - Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is undertaking a mass cleanliness-cum-awareness drive in 50 identified beaches under the “Swachh – Nirmal Tat Abhiyaan.
- The identified beaches are in 10 coastal States/Union Territories (UTs)

namely Gujarat, Daman & Diu, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha.
- The cleaning drives in all beaches are being undertaken, involving school/college students of Eco-clubs, district administration, institutions, volunteers, local communities and other stakeholders.
- Collected waste will be processed as per extant Waste Management Rules, 2016.
- Environment Education Division of the Ministry and Society of Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) under the aegis of MoEF&CCwill be responsible for the overall coordination for the drive in 50 beaches.

COCSSO

- Conference of Central and State Statistical Organizations (COCSSO)is a Conference organized by MoSPI, Government of India every year.
- The 27th COCSSO was inaugurated at Kolkata, West Bengal.
- COCSSO is a major national forum for coordination between the Central and State Statistical Agencies with the objectives of putting in coordinated efforts for making available reliable and timely statistics to planners and policy makers.
- The detailed deliberations in the conference will enable the State Governments to develop their State Indicator Frameworks in line with the NIF and will strengthen the statistical system of the country.

National Education Day

- National Education Day celebrated every year in India on November 11 to commemorate the birth anniversary of MaulanaAbul Kalam Azad.
- From 2008, the Ministry of Human Resource Development had decided to celebrate November 11 as National Education Day.
- MaulanaAbul Kalam Azad was an Indian scholar and independence activist who served as the first Minister of Education of independent India.
- During his tenure as education minister, he established a national education system and his primary focus was free primary education.
- He was also a pioneer for the establishment of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) and the foundation of the University Grants Commission (UGC) - an institution to supervise and advance higher education across the country.
- In 1992, posthumously he was awarded Bharat Ratna nation’s highest civilian honor, for his contributions toward education.

Source: PIB, The Indian Express

