Prelim Bits 15-06-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Integrated Grain Storage

The Union Cabinet recently approved the constitution of an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) to facilitate the world's largest grain storage plan in the cooperative sector.

- **Launch –** 2023.
- **Aim -** To set up a network of integrated grain storage facilities through *Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)* across the country.
- **Pilot Project** - Ministry of Cooperation.
- **Features –** It will spread over 1 acre of land and will be built at a cost Rs 2.25 crore.
- It will have a custom hiring centre, a multi-purpose hall - procurement centers, primary processing units for cleaning and winnowing - a storage shed, and container storage and silos.
- It is based on the *hub and spoke* model.
- All the 63,000 PACs will have a combined grain storage capacity of 70 million tonnes.
- **Budgetary Allocation** - The plan does not have a separate allocation and will be implemented by the convergence of 8 existing schemes under 3 ministries.

Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)

- PACS are *village level cooperative credit societies* that serve as the last link in a 3-tier cooperative credit structure headed by the State Cooperative Banks (SCB) at the state level.
- Credit from the SCBs is transferred to the district central cooperative banks (DCCBs),that operate at the district level.
- The DCCBs work with PACS, which deal directly with farmers.
- Individual farmers are members of the PACS, and office-bearers are elected from within them.
- They provide
    - Input facilities in form of cash (short term lending or crop loan) or kind component
    - Agriculture implements on hiring basis
    - Storage facility

References

The Indian Express | Integrated foodgrain storage

PIB | World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in Cooperative Sector

Memorial wall for fallen United Nations peacekeepers

India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj introduced the draft resolution titled 'Memorial wall for fallen United Nations peacekeepers' in the UN General Assembly hall.

- **Memorial Wall** - The UN General Assembly has adopted a draft resolution introduced by

India to establish a memorial wall in the UN Headquarters to honour fallen peacekeepers.

- The resolution was submitted by 18 countries including Bangladesh, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Nepal, Rwanda and the U.S.
- The resolution was co-sponsored by nearly *190 UN Member States* and was adopted by consensus.
- In 2015, the Permanent Mission of India to the UN launched a *virtual memorial wall*, dedicated to the Indian troops who made the supreme sacrifice while doing active service as UN peacekeepers.
- The initiative was a precursor to the eventual construction of the Peacekeepers Memorial Wall.
- It is an appropriate way to commemorate all the troops from UN member states who had given their lives while on duty under the Blue Flag of the United Nations.

International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers - May 29

- **India's Contribution to UN Peacekeeping -** India is currently the ***3rd largest contributor*** of uniformed personnel to UN Peacekeeping with more than 6,000 military and police personnel.
- About 177 Indian peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice, the highest number by far from any troop-contributing country.

Blue helmets are the UN military personnel that work alongside the UN Police and civilian colleagues to promote stability, security and peace processes.

Reference

The Hindu | Memorial wall for fallen United Nations peacekeepers

Withdrawal of general consent for CBI

Tamil Nadu announced that it has withdrawn the general consent given to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- It was set up in 1963 by a resolution of the *Ministry of Home Affairs*.
- It is now under the *Ministry of Personnel, Pension & Public Grievances.*
- It was established based on the recommendations of ***Santhanam Committee.***
- It is a *non-constitutional* body.
- CBI is governed by *The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946.*
- Section 6 of the DPSE Act authorises the *central government* to direct CBI to probe a case within the jurisdiction of any state *on the recommendation* of the concerned state government.
- The Supreme Court and High Courts, however, can order CBI to investigate such a crime anywhere in the country *without the consent* of the state.
- There are 2 types of consent for a probe by the CBI. These are: general and specific.
- **General Consent** - When a state gives a general consent to the CBI for probing a case, the agency is not required to seek fresh permission every time it enters that state in connection with investigation or for every case.

- **Specific Consent** - When a general consent is withdrawn, CBI needs to seek case-wise consent for investigation from the concerned state government.
- If specific consent is not granted, the CBI officials will not have the power of police personnel when they enter that state.
- **States that have withdrawn the general consent** – Tamil Nadu, Mizoram, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Kerala, Jharkhand, Punjab and Meghalaya.

References

The Hindu | TN Withdraws general consent for CBI

The Indian Express | Tamil Nadu withdraws general consent accorded to CBI

Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2022 Report

People forcefully displaced due to violence, climate crises saw the sharpest rise in 2022.

- It is released annually by the United Nations refugee agency, ***Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)***.
- **Findings** - The number of people who were uprooted from their hometowns due to social and climate crises in 2022 was 21% higher than in 2021.
- More than 108.4 million people were forcibly displaced by the end of 2022, 30% of them were children.
- Of these, 35.3 million were people who had to move to another country for safety (refugees).
- A large share of refugees were from Ukraine, because of Russia-Ukraine War and the displacement of Ukrainians also was the global fastest since World War II.
- **Displacement because of Climate disasters -** Climate disasters caused 32.6 million internal displacements throughout 2022 and 8.7 million of the people did not manage to return home by the end of the year.
- Disaster related internal displacement accounted for more than half (54 %) of all new displacements in 2022.
- At the end of 2022, an estimated 4.4 million people worldwide were stateless or of undetermined nationality, 2% more than at the end of 2021.
- Stateless people are those who are not recognised as citizens by any government.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

- It is a UN Refugee Agency.
- **Aim** - To save lives, protecting rights and building a better future for people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution.
- It serves as the 'guardian' of the *1951 Convention* and its *1967 Protocol*.
- So far, 146 countries are party to the 1951 Convention, and 147 to the 1967 Protocol.
- Countries that have ratified the Refugee Convention are obliged to protect refugees that are on their territory, in accordance with its terms.
- India is *not a member* to this convention nor to the protocol.

Reference

Down to Earth | Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2022 report

Mayon Volcano

A gentle eruption of the most active volcano in Philippines has forced nearly 18,000 people to flee to emergency shelters.

- **Mayon Volcano -** It is a *highly active stratovolcano* in the southeastern Luzon, *Philippines.*
- It is called the ***world's most perfect volcanic cone*** because of the symmetry of its shape.
- It is located at the centre of *Mayon Volcano National Park*.
- It is located on the *Pacific Ring of Fire*, the rim of seismic faults where most of the world's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur.
- It's most destructive eruption was in 1814, when the town of Cagsawa was buried and approximately 1,200 people were killed.

Pacific Ring of Fire

- *Pacific Ring of Fire or Circum-Pacific Belt* is a long seismically active belt along the Pacific Ocean characterized by earthquake epicentres, active volcanoes, and tectonic plate boundaries.
- It is home to about *75% of the world's volcanoes and about 90% of earthquakes* occur here.
- It traces boundaries between several tectonic plates - The Pacific, Cocos, Indian-Australian, Nazca, North American, and Philippine Plates.
- The abundance of volcanoes and earthquakes along the Ring of Fire is caused by the amount of *movement of tectonic plates* in the area.

Reference

The Indian Express | Mayon Volcano Eruption

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