Prelim Bits 23-07-2022 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Russia -Ukraine Grain Export Deal

Russian and Ukrainian officials have signed deals to end a standoff over grain exports brought on by the war in Ukraine.

- Ending a wartime standoff, Russia and Ukraine has signed separate identical agreements with the U.N. and Turkey to export Ukrainian grain as well as Russian grains and fertilizer.
- The war was endangering food supplies for many developing nations and could worsen hunger for up to 181 million people.
- Russian and Ukrainian officials have blamed each other for the blocked grain shipments.
- Now the deal is seen as a beacon of hope for a world that is in a desperate need of Ukrainian and Russian exports to address the global food security challenges.
- U.S. welcomes the agreement in principle and wants Russia to be held accountable for implementing this agreement.
- Ukraine is one of the world's largest exporters of wheat, corn and sunflower oil, but Russia's invasion of the country and naval blockade of its ports have halted shipments.
- Some grain are being transported through Europe by rail, road and river, but the prices of vital commodities like wheat and barley have soared during the nearly five-month war.
- **The Deal -** The deal makes provisions for the safe passage of ships.
- A control centre will be established in Istanbul staffed by U.N., Turkish, Russian and Ukrainian officials, to run and coordinate the process.
- Ships would be inspected to ensure that they are not carrying weapons.
- Also Ukraine wants no Russian ships to escort vessels as well as no Russian representative present at Ukrainian ports.
- The agreement also includes points on running Ukrainian grain ships along safe corridors that avoid known mines in the Black Sea.
- As a result Ukraine is expected to export 22 million tons of grain and other agricultural products that have been stuck in Black Sea ports due to the war.
- The deal is expected to be implemented in next few days.

Reference

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Nyaya Mitras

Nyaya Mitra aims to facilitate expeditious disposal of 15 years old pending cases in High Courts and Subordinate Courts.

- Nyaya Mitra was launched in April 2017,
- It aims at assisting the district judiciary in reduction of decade old pending court case.
- Districts are selected based on highest pendency of court cases over 10 years of period sourced from National Judiciary Data Grid (NJDG) database.
- Nyaya Mitra (NM) is a retired judicial officer / executive officer having legal degree / background who is located at High Courts/ District Courts.
- Key functions of the Nyaya Mitra includes
    - providing assistance to the Judiciary in reduction of decade old pending court case,
    - liaising with the different departments to fast disposal of cases,
    - referring cases to Lok Adalat etc.
- 27 Nyaya Mitras engaged from April 2017-March 2019, assisted the courts concerned in disposal of 2019 old cases.
- For the year 2021-2022, 11 Nyaya Mitras have been engaged so far.

Reference

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Samta Nyay Kendras

In a bid to create an inclusive society, a legal aid clinic for transgender persons has been set up.

- The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Chandigarh in association with Chandigarh State Aids Control Society and the Association of Professional Social Workers & Development Practitioners (APSWDP), has opened a Legal Services Clinic, named as 'Samta Nyay Kendra'.
- The objective of this Kendra is to exclusively provide legal services and counselling to transgender community to redress their legal grievances.
- It is set up under the National Legal Services Authority (Legal Services Clinics) Regulations, 2011.
- The clinic will be functional on Wednesday and Saturday.
- Panel Lawyers and Para Legal Volunteers will deputed on need-based assignments by the DLSA.
- Also, paralegal volunteers will be deputed from within members of the transgender community in an inclusive atmosphere.
- The Kendra is also spreading legal awareness regarding various rights and entitlements of the transgender persons.
- Apart from Chandigarh, five such exclusive Legal Services Clinics have also been set up at locations having predominant transgender community in five districts of Tamil Nadu namely Namakkal, Tiruvallur, Tirunelveli, Madurai and Thanjavur.

- In a landmark judgement in 2014 the Supreme Court recognised transgender persons as the third gender.
- The judgment dawned a new hope that transgender persons would ensure dignity of life that society accords to their counterparts — men and women.

National Legal Services Authority

- The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society and to organize Lok Adalats for amicable settlement of disputes.
- NALSA is housed at Supreme Court of India.
- In every State, State Legal Services Authority (SALSA) has been constituted to give effect to the policies and directions of the NALSA.
- The SALSA is headed by Hon'ble the Chief Justice of the respective High Court who is the Patron-in-Chief of the State Legal Services Authority.
- Similarly in every District, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) has been constituted to implement Legal Services Programmes in the District.
- The DLSA is situated in the District Courts Complex in every District and chaired by the District Judge of the respective district..

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National Broadband Mission

The National Broadband Mission envisions a goal of 'Broadband for All'.

- National Broadband Mission (NBM) was launched in December 2019.
- It seeks to fast track growth of digital communications infrastructure, bridge the digital divide, facilitate digital empowerment and inclusion and provide affordable and universal access of broadband for all.
- NBM relies on three principles namely
    - Universality
    - Affordability
    - Quality
- **Objectives** - Broadband access to all villages by 2022.
- Facilitate universal and equitable access to broadband services for across the country and especially in rural and remote areas.
- Laying of incremental 30 lakhs route km of Optical Fiber Cable and an increase in tower density from 0.42 to 1.0 tower per thousand of the population by 2024.
- Significantly improve the quality of services for mobile and internet.
- Develop innovative implementation models for Right of Way (RoW) and to work with States/UTs for having consistent policies pertaining to expansion of digital

infrastructure including for RoW approvals required for laying of OFC.
- Develop a Broadband Readiness Index (BRI) to measure the availability of digital communications infrastructure and conducive policy ecosystem within a State/UT.
- Creation of a digital fibre map of the Digital Communications network and infrastructure, including Optical Fiber Cables and Towers, across the country.
- Investment from stakeholders of USD 100 billion (Rs 7 Lakh Crore) including Rs 70,000 crore from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).
- Address policy and regulatory changes required to accelerate the expansion and creation of digital infrastructure and services.
- Work with all stakeholders including the concerned Ministries / Departments/ Agencies, and Ministry of Finance, for enabling investments for the Mission.
- **Deliverables -** All villages to have access to broadband by 2022.
- **Availability of high broadband speeds** of up to 50 Mbps in a phased manner at par with those of emerging and developed countries.
- **Accelerate Fiberization** to increase the route length Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) to 50 lakh kms by 2024-25.
- **Increase the tower density.** It is envisaged to be increase the number of towers to 15 lakhs by 2024-25.
- **Connect at least 70% of the telecom towers in the country with fibre** by 2024-25.
- **Mapping of Fiber** on the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan Platform.
- Facilitate rollout of 5G network and strengthening of 4G network
- Promote Make in India.

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Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana

"Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana" provide financial support for setting up Second Generation (2G) ethanol projects in the country.

- GoI launched Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme in 2003 for blending ethanol in Petrol to address environmental concerns due to fossil fuel burning
- The target is to achieve 10% blending of Ethanol in petrol by 2022.
- For this ethanol produced from molasses and non-food feed stock like celluloses and lignocelluloses material including petrochemical route can be used.
- As per 2017-18 blending of 4.2% was achieved.
- Therefore, an alternate route viz. Second Generation (2G) Ethanol from biomass and other wastes is being explored by MoP&NG to bridge the supply gap for EBP programme.
- In this direction, "Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana" is being launched as a tool to create 2G Ethanol capacity in the country and attract investments in this new sector.
- **Objectives -** Establish commercially viable projects for 2G Ethanol production.

- Provide remunerative income to farmers for their otherwise waste agriculture residues.
- Address concerns of environmental pollution caused by burning of biomass/ agriculture residues.
- Help in meeting the targets envisaged in Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme promoted by Government of India & Government of India vision of 10% reduction in import dependence by way of reducing the use of fossil fuels.
- To create rural & urban employment opportunities.
- To contribute to Swacch Bharat Mission by supporting the aggregation of non-food biofuel feedstocks such as waste biomass and urban waste.
- Indigenisation of second generation biomass to ethanol technologies.
- **Funding –** A maximum financial assistance of Rs.150 crore per project for commercial projects and Rs.15 crore per project for demonstration projects has been prescribed.
- This is meant for improving commercial viability as well as promoting R&D for development and adoption of technologies in the field of production of 2G ethanol.
- **Implementation -** 12 Commercial Scale and 10 demonstration scale Second Generation (2G) ethanol Projects will be provided a Viability Gap Funding (VGF) support in two phases:
    - Phase-I (2018-19 to 2022-23): wherein six commercial projects and five demonstration projects will be supported.
    - Phase-II (2020-21 to 2023-24): wherein remaining six commercial projects and five demonstration projects will be supported.

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One Country Two Systems

Chinese President Xi Jinping has said that there is no rreason to change the one country, two systems" formula during his address at global financial hub.

- The British had taken control of Hong Kong in 1842 after the First Opium War.
- In 1898, the British government and the Qing dynasty of China signed the Second Convention of Peking, which allowed the British to take control of the islands surrounding Hong Kong, known as New Territories, on lease for 99 years.
- London promised Peking that the islands would be retuned to China after the expiry of the lease, in 1997.
- Macau, on the other side, had been ruled by the Portuguese from 1557. They started withdrawing troops in the mid-1970s.
- In the 1980s, China initiated talks with both Britain and Portugal for the transfer of the two territories.
- In talks, Beijing promised to respect the region's autonomy under the One Country Two Systems proposal.
- In 1984, China and the U.K. signed the Sino-British Joint Declaration in Beijing, which set the terms for the autonomy and the legal, economic and governmental systems for

Hong Kong post 1997.

- Similarly, in 1987, China and Portugal signed the Joint Declaration on the Question of Macau in which China made similar promises for the region of Macau after it was handed over to Beijing.
- Hong Kong returned to Chinese control on July 1, 1997, and Macau's sovereignty was transferred on December 20, 1999.
- Both regions became Special Administrative Regions of China.
- The regions would have their own currencies, economic and legal systems, but defence and diplomacy would be decided by Beijing.
- Their mini-Constitutions would remain valid for 50 years — till 2047 for Hong Kong and 2049 for Macau.
- However over years, there has been a growing outcry from Hong Kong's pro-democracy civil society against China's alleged attempts to erode the city's autonomy.
- In 2016-17, six legislators critical of Beijing were debarred. In 2018, the Hong Kong National Party, a localist party that has been critical of Beijing, was outlawed.
- Carrie Lam, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, proposed an extradition Bill, which sought to extradite Hong Kongers to places with which the city doesn't have extradition agreements.
- Critics said it would allow the city government to extradite Beijing critics to mainland China where the judicial system is subservient to the ruling Communist Party.
- Due to large scale protest the bill was finally withdrawn.

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