

Prelim Bits 24-07-2021 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare launched the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization' (SMAM) in 2014-15.
- **Purpose** - The aim is to increase the reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers and to the regions and difficult areas where farm power availability is low.
- Under it, subsidy is provided for purchase of various types of agricultural equipment and machinery,
 1. For States other than North Eastern Region (NER) States, the subsidy is to the extent of 40-50% and
 2. For NER States, it is 100% limited to Rs.1.25 lakhs per beneficiary.
- **Implementation** - The SMAM is being implemented by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare with effect from 2014-15. The scheme is implemented by the respective State Governments.
- The Department has also developed a Farm Machinery Direct Benefit Transfer (FMDBT) portal for implementing SMAM. Farmers can register on this portal through online registration.
- **Objectives** - Using the central grants provided under the SMAM, the States distribute machines to farmers.
- To establish Custom Hiring Centres, Hi-tech hubs and Farm Machinery Banks to make machines and equipments available to farmers on rental basis.
- To create awareness among stakeholders through demonstration and capacity building activities.
- To ensure performance testing and certification of agricultural machines at designated testing centres located all over the country.

Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan

- The restructured Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan is being implemented from 2018-19 across all States/UTs.
- This scheme is an effort in the direction of achieving "Sabka Sath, Sabka Gaon, Sabka Vikas".
- **Implementation** of the activities of the scheme are broadly aligned for

achieving the SDGs with main thrust on Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) identified under Mission Antyodaya and 117 Aspirational districts.

- The key principles of SDGs, i.e. reaching the farthest first and universal coverage, along with gender equality will be embedded in the design of all capacity building interventions - trainings, training modules, etc.
- Priority will be given to subjects of national importance that affects the excluded groups the most, e.g. poverty, primary health services, nutrition, immunization, sanitation, education, digital transactions etc.
- **Funds** - Under the scheme, funds are released to the States/Union Territories for different activities meant for strengthening of PRIs.
- Funds aren't released district-wise/Panchayat-wise under the scheme.
- Under the scheme, there is no provision for forming new Panchayats.
- The scheme will strengthen Gram Sabhas to function as effective institutions with social inclusion of citizens particularly the vulnerable groups.
- It will establish the institutional structure for capacity building of PRIs at the national, state and district level with adequate human resources and infrastructure.

National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021

- National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2021 aims at lowering the incidence and prevalence of rare diseases based on an integrated and comprehensive preventive strategy encompassing,
 1. Awareness generation,
 2. Premarital, post-marital, pre-conception and post-conception screening and counselling programmes to prevent births of children with rare diseases, and
 3. Enabling access to affordable health care to patients of rare diseases.
- To know more about the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2021, click [here](#) and [here](#).

Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation

- The United Nation's Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific's (UNESCAP) has released the Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation 2021.
- The Global Survey evaluates economies **every two years on 5 key indicators** - Transparency, Formalities, Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation, Paperless Trade, and Cross-Border Paperless Trade.
- The 2021 Survey includes an assessment of 58 trade facilitation measures covered by the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement.
- It evidences whether or not the trade facilitation measures being taken have

the desired impact and helps draw comparison amongst countries.

- A higher score for a country also helps businesses in their investment decisions.
- **India's performance** - India has scored 90.32% in the 2021 Survey.
- India is the best performing country when compared to South and South West Asia region (63.12%) and Asia Pacific region (65.85%).
- The overall score of India has also been found to be greater than many OECD countries including France, UK, Canada, Norway, Finland etc. and the overall score is greater than the average score of EU.

Impact of Cyclones on Fishing Sector

- **Disaster management** - The State Governments concerned provide necessary relief to affected people by natural disaster from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) already placed at their disposal.
- Further assistance is provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) as per the procedure for management of relief necessitated by notified natural disasters.
- **Assessment** - In the case of cyclones Amphan, Taukate and Yaas, the Central Government constituted the Inter-Ministerial Central Teams (IMCT) that assessed the damages caused due to cyclones.
- IMCT visited the affected areas of Gujarat, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha for on the spot assessment of damages and recommendations of Sub-Committee for National Executive Committee (SC- NEC).
- Based on the IMCT report, the High Level Committee (HLC) had approved some amount to the fisheries sector from NDRF subject to the adjustment of 50% of balance available in their SDRF account.
- IMCT report recommended help especially to the fisheries sector.
- **Fisheries sector** - The Department of Fisheries (DoF) implements the Schemes for overall development of fisheries sector.
- Fishermen are provided assistance for various components and activities like boat replacement, nets etc., under the [Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojna](#) is implemented by DoF through the State Governments.

Source: PIB