Prelim Bits 24-08-2017

Mechi River

\n\n

\n
- Cabinet approves MoU between India and Nepal for construction of a new bridge over Mechi River at Indo-Nepal border.
\n
- Mechi is a trans-boundary River that originates in the Mahabharat Range in Nepal.
\n
- It enters Indian state of Bihar to join **Mahananda River**.
\n
- The cost for the construction will be borne by GOI through Asian Development Bank (ADB) loan.
\n
- National Highway and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) under Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has been designated as the implementing agency for this project.
\n
- There is also a proposal for the construction of **Kankai dam** as a part of Mechi and Kosi river interlinking project.
\n

\n\n

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana

\n\n

\n
- The Cabinet Committee has approved the renaming of SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) as "Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana".
\n
- It is the new Central Sector Scheme that aims to supplement agriculture, modernize processing and decrease Agriculture waste.
\n
- The implementation period of the scheme is 2016-20 coterminous with the 14th Finance Commission cycle.
\n

- The implementation of this scheme will result in creation of modern infrastructure, growth of food processing sector and providing better prices to the farmers.
\n

\n\n

Mini-Ministerial meeting of WTO

\n\n

\n
- India will participate in a mini-ministerial meeting of trade ministers from select WTO member countries at Marrakesh.
\n
- The meeting is to finalise the agenda for the upcoming ministerial conference to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina in December 2017.
\n
- Ministerial Conference is the topmost decision-making body of the WTO, which usually meets every two years.
\n
- It takes decisions on all matters under any of the multilateral trade agreements.
\n
- The last Ministerial Conference was held in Nairobi in 2015.
\n

\n\n

APEDA Standards

\n\n

\n
- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is an export promotion body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
\n
- APEDA is mandated with the responsibility of development of the scheduled products such as products of fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry, dairy, honey, jaggery and sugar, cocoa, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, cereal, groundnuts, peanuts and walnuts, floriculture, guar gum, herbal and medicinal plants.
\n
- In addition to this, APEDA has been entrusted with the responsibility to monitor import of sugar.
\n

- It is also responsible for fixing of standards and specifications for the scheduled products and improving their packaging and marketing for the purpose of exports.
\n
- “Scheduled products” means any of the agricultural or processed food products included in the First Schedule of APEDA Act.
\n
- NITI Aayog has recently suggested that standards set by APEDA should be followed for organic products to push deeper into global as well as domestic markets.
\n

\n\n

National Green Tribunal

\n\n

\n
- NGT has given the Karnataka government 10 days to provide a concrete action to save the **Bellandur Lake in Bengaluru** from frothing.
\n
- The frothing was due to the presence of Phosphorus in detergent waste flowing from residential complexes.
\n
- NGT was established in 2010 under NGT Act with its principal bench in Delhi.
\n
- Its objective is to provide an effective and speedy disposal of cases pertaining to environment protection, conservation of forests and for seeking compensation for damages caused to people or property due to violation of environmental laws.
\n
- The NGT has the power to hear all civil cases relating to environmental issues that are linked to the following laws -\n
    \n
    - The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974;
    \n
    - The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;
    \n
    - The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981;
    \n
    - The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986;
    \n
    - The Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991;
    \n

    - The Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
      \n
  \n
  \n
- There is a bar on civil court to take cases under these listed laws in Schedule 1 of NGT act.
  \n
- The NGT has not been vested with powers to hear any matter relating to the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the Indian Forest Act, 1927 and various laws enacted by States relating to forests, tree preservation etc.
  \n
- The NGT is not bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice.
  \n

\n\n

Mongoose

\n\n

  \n
- Mongoose is a protected species under Part II of Schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
  \n
- Indian grey mongoose is the state animal of Chandigarh.
  \n
- Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has recently seized mongoose-hair painting brushes in Kolkata.
  \n
- Species listed in Schedule I and part II of Schedule II are provided absolute protection and offences under these are prescribed the highest penalties. e.g Gangetic Dolphin, Clouded Leopard, Sloth bear etc
  \n
- Species listed in Schedule III and Schedule IV are also protected, but the penalties are much lower. e.g Chital, Indian porcupine etc
  \n
- Schedule V includes vermins i.e the animals which may be hunted. e.g Common Crows, Fruit Bats, Nilgais etc
  \n
- The plants in Schedule VI are prohibited from cultivation and planting. e.g Pitcher plant, Red Vanda etc.
  \n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: PIB, The Hindu

\n

