Prelim Bits 24-09-2021 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm

Arunachal Pradesh has identified 1.33 lakh hectares of wasteland for taking forward the National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP).

- NMEO-OP is a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme that will help in,
    1. Reducing the heavy dependence on imports for edible oils,
    2. Increasing the domestic production of edible oils to 3 times (11 lakh MT by 2025-26), and productivity of oil palm,
    3. Increasing an additional area of 6.5 lakh hectare (ha.) for oil palm till 2025-26 and thus reaching the target of 10 lakh ha ultimately,
    4. Increasing the income of the farmers.
- NMEO-OP has a special focus on the North east region and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- The production of Crude Palm Oil (CPO) is expected to go up to 11.20 lakh tonnes by 2025-26 and up to 28 lakh tonnes by 2029-30.
- **Viability Price (VP)** will be the price assurance given by the Government of India to the oil palm farmers for their Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFBs) from which oil is the industry extracts.
- This VP shall be the annual average CPO price of the last 5 years adjusted with the wholesale price index to be multiplied by 14.3%.
- This will be fixed yearly for the oil palm year (1st November-31st October).
- **Formula price (FP)** will also be fixed which will be 14.3% of CPO and will be fixed on a monthly basis.
- **Viability gap funding** will be the VP-FP and if the need arises, it would be paid directly to the farmers accounts in the form of DBT.
- To give impetus to the North-East and Andaman, the Government will additional bear a cost of 2% of the CPO price to ensure that the farmers are paid at par with the rest of India.
- There is a sunset clause for the scheme which is 1st November 2037.
- **Assistance** - A substantial increase of assistance for planting material for oil palm, rejuvenation of old gardens, seed gardens, etc with the special focus on North-East & Andaman regions.
- Similar Links - National Food Security Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP).

MSP for Oilseeds

The Union government announced very high Minimum Support Price (MSP) for rabi crops such as oilseeds and pulses to boost their production.

- **Reasons** - The 50% rise in price of edible oils is mainly due to labour shortages and crop failures in major edible oil-producing nations - Indonesia, Malaysia, Argentina, etc.

  Over 60% of India’s edible oil needs are met through imports.

- So, the government increased MSP for oilseeds to,
    1. Cut down India's dependence on foreign oil imports by boosting domestic production, and
    2. Protect Indian consumers from price shocks due to global factors.
- **Benefits** - The greater percentage increase in the support prices for oil seeds when compared to that of other crops could increase the amount of land and other resources used to cultivate oil seeds.
- But it is unlikely to offer immediate benefits in terms of higher domestic production of oil seeds and lower edible oil prices for consumers.
- If these measures can help improve oilseed supply in the long run, they can indeed benefit consumers.
- Related links - MSP for Kharif Crops and MSP for Rabi Crops

WHO's Global Air Quality Guidelines 2021

The Global Air Quality Guidelines (AQGs) 2021 released by the World Health Organization (WHO) would make India appear worse than it already looked under the existing 2005 norms.

> As per the WHO, every year, exposure to air pollution is estimated to cause 7 million premature deaths and result in the loss of more healthy years of life.
>
> In children, this could include reduced lung growth and function, respiratory infections and aggravated asthma.
>
> In adults, ischaemic heart disease and stroke are the most common causes of premature death attributable to outdoor air pollution.

- WHO's new Global AQGs are an evidence-based and practical tool for improving the quality of the air on which all life depends.
- AQGs recommend air quality levels for 6 pollutants - Particulate Matter (PM2.5 and PM10), ozone (O3), nitrogen dioxide (NO2) sulphur dioxide (SO2) and carbon monoxide (CO).
- It also highlights good practices for the management of certain PM types (black/elemental carbon, ultrafine particles, particles from sand & dust storms) - Applicable to both outdoor and indoor environments globally.

Ocean State Report 5

The Copernicus Marine Environmental Monitoring Service has released the 5th edition of the Ocean State Report (OSR 5).

- The report has said that the global ocean is undergoing severe changes from natural variations, over-exploitation and anthropogenic influences.
- These changes caused the **sea level to rise by 3.1 millimeters each year** on an average between January 1993 and May 2020.

Oceans/ Seas	**Sea level rise**
Baltic Sea	4.5 mm per year
Iberian Biscay Ireland Seas	3.6 mm per year

Pacific Islands (Total Area)	3.4 mm per year
North West Shelf	2.9 mm per year
Mediterranean Sea	2.5 mm per year
Black Sea	1.7 mm per year

- The report showed that the sea ice is steadily decreasing in the Arctic.
- It has also showed that the warming ocean waters have caused many marine species to move towards cooler waters.
    - This migration has led to the introduction of non-native and invasive species to different marine ecosystems.
- Around 50% of Earth's oxygen production takes place in the ocean, sustaining marine life cycles.
- This is threatened by growing human activities leading to climate change and eutrophication. This deoxygenates the oceans and seas and has adverse consequences on the marine life.
- **Tools & technologies** - The report suggested new tools for monitoring ocean changes:
    1. Forecast alert systems in Malta,
    2. Prediction models for jellyfish blooms in the Mediterranean Sea,
    3. Real-time monitoring programmes for tailored sea ice data.
- These tools can help scientists and policy-makers adapt to a changing ocean on a local, regional and global scale.

FASTER System

The Supreme Court introduced the Fast and Secured Transmission of Electronic Records (FASTER) system.

- This system will help in communicating crucial decisions including orders on bail and stay of arrest electronically to prison authorities and investigating agencies through a secure channel.
- The system is meant to ensure that undertrials aren't made to wait for days on end behind bars to be released because the certified hard copies of their bail orders took time to reach the prison.
- It would also prevent unnecessary arrests and custody of people even after the court had already granted them its protection.
- It may even communicate a stay on an execution ordered by the final court on time.
- The FASTER system will be a big fillip to the fundamental rights of life, dignity and personal liberty.
- Related Links - SUPACE Portal

Source: PIB, The Hindu, The Indian Express, Down To Earth

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