Prelim Bits 27-07-2019

Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana (AHVY)

- It focuses on integrated development of handicrafts clusters with participation of craftpersons.
- The selected artisans in these clusters are supported for sustainable development through NGO partners.
- The package of support under AHVY can be clubbed under,

1. Social Interventions
2. Technological interventions
3. Marketing interventions
4. Financial interventions
5. Cluster specific infrastructure related interventions

- The salient features are,

1. Base Line Survey & Mobilization of Artisans
2. Design & Technology Upgradation
3. Human Resource Development
4. Direct Benefit to Artisans
5. Infrastructure and Technology Support
6. Research and Development
7. Marketing Support & Services

- Under this scheme 90 clusters across the country are identified.
- It also cover aspirational districts, women clusters, weaker section and export potential clusters.
- The objective is to transform these clusters by ensuring self-sustainment of the Self Help Groups/artisans of these clusters.
- 'Hastkala Sahyog Shivirs' was organized all over the country for providing Aadhaar linked Pahchan card, marketing facilities, to artisans through Mudra loan.

Improving Milking Capacity of Cows

- Dairy activities form an essential part of the rural Indian economy, serving as an important source of employment and income.
- India also has the largest bovine population in the world.

- However, the milk production per animal is significantly low as compared to the other major dairy producers.
- So, the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying has been implementing following schemes to improve the Milking capacity,

1. Rashtriya Gokul Mission - for conservation of bovine population thereby enhancing their productivity.
2. National Dairy Plan-I - implemented in 18 major dairy states for enhancing milk production and productivity.
3. Breed Improvement Institutes – It provide breeding inputs in the form of High Genetic merit bulls for Artificial Insemination and semen doses of bulls with high genetic potential.

- Unproductive animals with intact reproductive efficiency can be used as surrogate mothers under Embryo Transfer Technology (ETT) and IVF.
- In Uttar Pradesh projects for establishment of two ETT labs with IVF facility have been sanctioned.
- These initiatives are a part of doubling dairy farmers' income.

Cambodia - China secret agreement

- It gives the Chinese military exclusive rights to use part of a Ream naval base of Cambodia, in the Gulf of Thailand.
- This would include posting military personnel, storing weapons and berthing warships.
- But both China and Cambodia have denied for such a base are in work.
- The **Gulf of Thailand** also known as the **Gulf of Siam**, is a shallow inlet in the western part of the South China Sea.
- It is bordered by Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam.
- The northern tip of the Gulf of Thailand is referred to as the Bay of Bangkok.
- The Gulf of Thailand is becoming popular for whale watching and known for its coral reefs.
- The **Thai Canal** also known as **Kra Canal** or **Kra Isthmus Canal** is a proposed canal that would connect the Gulf of Thailand with the Andaman Sea.
- China could fund the proposed 'Kra Canal' project.
- It is envisaged that the canal would improve transportation in the region.

Himalayan knotweed

- Himalayan knotweed (Persicaria wallichii) is a plant species in the knotweed family.

- It is a native to the Himalayas and it was originally introduced as an ornamental garden plant.
- It grows on stream sides, hedge banks, woodland edges, roadsides, railway banks and waste ground.
- Once established this plant grows into extremely dense stands that out-compete all native vegetation.
- It can grow to about 6 feet in height, alter natural ecosystems and are difficult to eradicate.
- It is among 27 different species of invasive flora identified by Keystone Foundation.
- It became the latest threat to '**Nilgiris ecosystem'** and the rate at which they spreads becomes a serious cause for concern.
- It threatens the biodiversity along streams and rivers and the wetlands in the Nilgiris.

Source: PIB, The Indian Express

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