Revamping Haryana's Johads - Model Ponds

Why in news?

- Haryana's Johads (community-owned water conservation structures) are all set for a revamp by the State government.
- The Pond and Waste Management Authority, governed by Haryana's Pond and Waste Management Authority Act is working on rehabilitation.

What is the Pond and Waste Management Authority Act?

- The objective of the Act is to establish an authority in the State -
    i. for development, protection, rejuvenation, conservation, construction and management of pond
    ii. for utilisation of pond water and treatment thereof
    iii. to manage and utilise treated effluent of sewage effluent treatment plants for irrigation, thereby reducing over-exploitation of ground water
- The Authority's primary functions are:
    i. to conduct survey and study the ponds, their boundaries and protected areas
    ii. to analyze pond water for ascertaining its suitability for irrigation and other uses
    iii. to take steps for regulation, control, protection, cleaning, beautification, conservation, reclamation, regeneration, restoration and construction of ponds
    iv. to make environmental impact assessment of the ponds
    v. to develop infrastructure (pumping machinery, channels and pipe systems for pond water utilization, sewage effluent treatment plants)

What is the plan?

- Haryana's Johads are community-owned rainwater storage wetland mainly used for harnessing water resources.
- The state government has come out with a plan of rehabilitating over 16,400 ponds in rural areas across the state.
- The objective is to analyze pond water to ascertain its suitability for irrigation and other uses.
- The basic idea is to analyse water resources, other than canal water, for irrigation purposes.

- It is done in coordination with the departments of animal husbandry and dairying, irrigation and urban local bodies.
- The Authority has started surveying the ponds.

- **Model ponds** - The Authority shall be developing 18 model ponds on a pilot project basis.
- Based on this, a future action plan will be prepared for renovation of other ponds.
- The main focus of the model ponds will be -

i. beautification
ii. demarcation of area for fishing and animals
iii. conservation of water to be used for irrigation purposes

- To begin with, each district of the state shall have a model pond each.

How does the rehabilitation process work?

- In April 2019, Haryana's Pond and Waste Management Authority asked urban local bodies to identify water bodies under their jurisdiction.
- [This was based on the National Green Tribunal's orders.]
- They were also asked to assign ponds a unique identification number.

- The government has created a Pond Data Management Software.
- It has started generating a 21-digit unique identification number for each such water body.
- A detailed database was prepared collecting details including name and type of water body (ponds, lakes, reservoirs), rural or urban, water conservation schemes.
- Name of basin and sub-basin in which it is located and whether it falls in a drought-prone or floor-prone area are also recorded.
- If done, it is said that Haryana would become the first state in the country to have a model village pond in each district.

What is the other project in this regard?

- The Command Area Development Authority (CADA) of Haryana has also taken up a pilot project on micro irrigation.
- It involves installation of solar powered micro irrigation infrastructure on 11 overflowing ponds of 11 villages of four districts.
- After successful implementation of these 11 schemes, similar project will be replicated in the remaining identified overflowing ponds in the state.

Source: Indian Express

