UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelim Bits 20-01-2025

State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)

Why in News?

Recently, the Union government has permitted the Kerala government to utilize Rs.120 crore from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for rehabilitation measures at Wayanad.

- **SDRF** – It is the ***primary fund available with State Governments*** for responses to notified disasters.
- **Established in** – *2005*, under Section 48 (1) (a) of the *Disaster Management Act, 2005*.
- **Nodal Ministry** – Ministry of Home Affairs.

Disasters covered under SDRF	Cyclone
	Drought
	Earthquake
	Fire
	Flood
	Tsunami
	Hailstorm
	Landslide
	Avalanche
	Cloudburst
	Pest Attack
	Frost
	Cold Waves

- **Immediate relief –** SDRF shall be *used only for meeting the expenditure for providing immediate relief* to the victims.
- **Funding** – It is based on the ***recommendations of the Financial Commissions.***
- **Contributions to the fund** – It is made by the *Central Government and State Governments* to all the states.
    - **For all states expect North-Eastern and Himalayan States** – The contribution is made by the Central Government and State Governments in the ratio of ***75:25***.
    - **For North-Eastern and Himalayan States** – The contribution is in the ratio ***90:10*** for union government and states.
    - The Himalayan states includes Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir.

- **2 equal installments** – The annual central contribution is released in *2 equal installments* as per the recommendation of the Finance Commission.
- **Local Disasters –** A State Government may use up to 10% of the funds available under the SDRF, which they consider to be 'disasters' within the local context in the State.
- They are *not included in the notified list of disasters of the Ministry of Home Affairs* and should be a listed state specific natural disasters of a state.
- **State specific natural disasters** – The State Government has listed the State specific natural disasters and notified clear and transparent norms and guidelines for such disasters with the approval of the State Authority, i.e. the ***State Executive Authority (SEC)***.

References

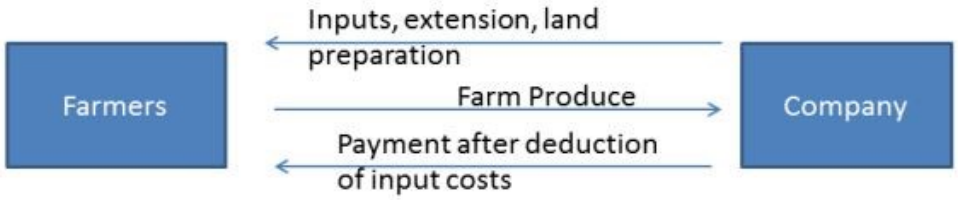
1. The Hindu| Rehabilitation measures at Wayanad
2. Ndmindia| State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)

Contract Farming (CF)

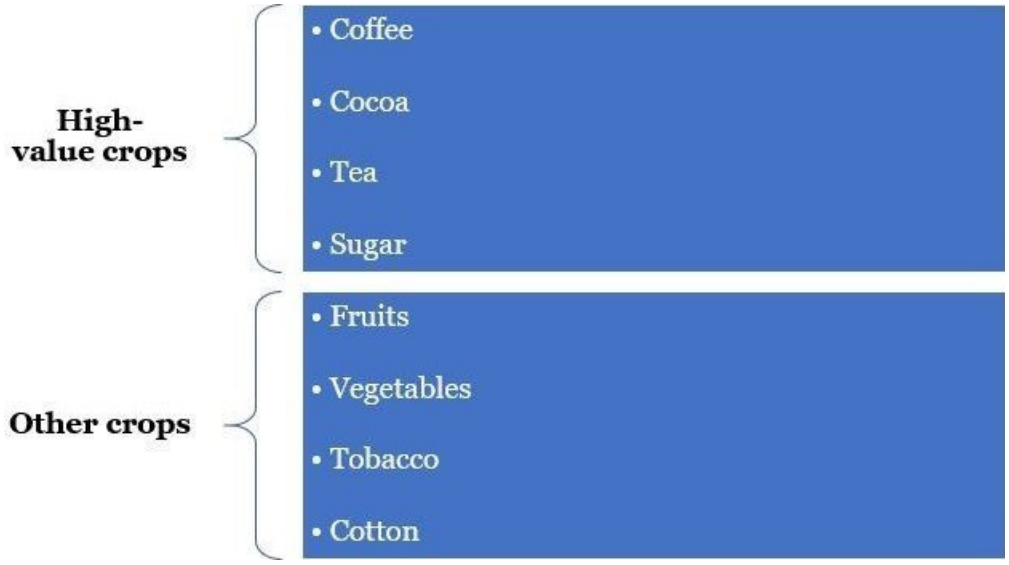
Why in News?

Recently, India turned from an importer to an exporter of frozen French Fries through Contract Farming (CF).

- **Contract Farming (CF)** – It is an ***agreement between farmers (producers) and buyers***, where both agree in advance on the terms and conditions for the production and marketing of farm products.



- **Conditions of CF** – It usually specify the following:
  - Price to be paid to the farmer.
  - Quantity and quality of the product demanded by the buyer.
  - Date for delivery to buyers.
- **Contract** – It includes more detailed information on how the production will be carried out or if inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and technical advice will be provided by the buyer.
- **Products best suited** – There is *no restriction to the types of agriculture products,* but certain products are more suited for contract farming practices than others.



Advantages	Disadvantages
Farmers	
• Easier access to inputs, services and credit. • Improved production and management skills. • Secure market or access new markets. • Reduction of price-related risks. • More stable income: better planning. • Introduction of new technologies.	• Loss of flexibility to sell to alternative buyers when prices increase. • Possible delays in payments and late delivery of inputs. • Risk of indebtedness from loans provided by the buyer. • Environmental risks from growing only one type of crop. • Unequal bargaining power between farmers and buyers.
Buyers	
• Consistent supply of raw materials. • Products conform to quality and safety standards. • Reduced input and labour costs when compared to integrated production on company-owned land. • Better chance to secure products of a consistent quality. • Can help to overcome land constraints. • Production more reliable than open-market purchase.	• High transaction costs from contracting with many small farmers. • Risks of side-selling if farmers decide to break the contract and sell to others. • Potential misuse of inputs if farmers use seeds and fertilizers provided. • By the company for another purpose. • Loss of flexibility to seek alternative supply. • Reputational risks if things go wrong.

India has emerged as a major exporter of French Fries (FF), which owes much to companies procuring potato directly from growers and deepening farmer engagement.

India's French Fries (FF) Exports

- **India's Potato production** – Around 60 million tonnes (mt) and is next only to China.
- **Varieties of potato for FF** – Santana, Innovator, Kennebec, Kufri Frysona and Kufri

FryoM.

- **Exports** – Are mostly to Southeast Asia (Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam), Middle East (Saudi Arabia, UAE and Oman) and even Japan and Taiwan.

India exported 135,877 tons of French Fries (FF) valued at Rs 1,478.73 crore. During April-October 2024, exports were 106,506 tonnes and worth Rs 1,056.92 crore.

References

1. The Indian Express| India as an Exporter in French Fries (FF)
2. FAO| Contract Farming

Kampala Declaration

Why in News?

The African Union Summit on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program recently concluded in Kampala, with adopting the transformative Kampala Declaration for Africa's agri-food systems.

- **Kampala Declaration** – It solely *focusing on agricultural production to a broader "agri-food systems" approach*.
- This holistic view considers the entire food value chain, from production to consumption, encompassing factors like nutrition, sustainability, and resilience.
- **Adopted by** – African leaders at the Extraordinary African Union Summit on the *Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP)* held in Kampala, Uganda, on January 11, 2025.
- **Key Features of the Kampala Declaration**:
- **Sustainable and Resilient Agri-food Systems** – The core objective is to create a food system that is not only productive but also environmentally sustainable and resilient to shocks.
- **Addressing Malnutrition** – The declaration emphasizes combating all forms of malnutrition, including undernutrition (stunting, wasting), micronutrient deficiencies, and even rising obesity rates.
- **Climate-Smart Agriculture** – Promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices is crucial. This includes adopting climate-smart technologies, improving water management, and enhancing soil health.
- **Intra-African Trade** – Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural products is seen as key to improving food security and economic growth.
- **Empowering Smallholder Farmers** – The declaration recognizes the critical role of smallholder farmers and aims to empower them through access to technology, markets, and finance.

Malabo Declaration is the previous framework for African agricultural development, fell short of its goals, particularly in eradicating hunger and

malnutrition.

- **Significance** – The strategy will also see *Africa reduce post-harvest loss by 50 %*, triple intra-African trade in agro-food products and inputs by 2035.
- It will also raise the share of locally processed food to 35% of agro-food GDP by 2035.
- The adoption of the strategy is seen as a pivotal moment that will lay the groundwork for agro-food systems across the continent, and enable countries to act.

References

1. Down to Earth| 10-year Strategy to Transform Agriculture
2. UNFCCC| Kampala Ministerial Declaration

Bharal

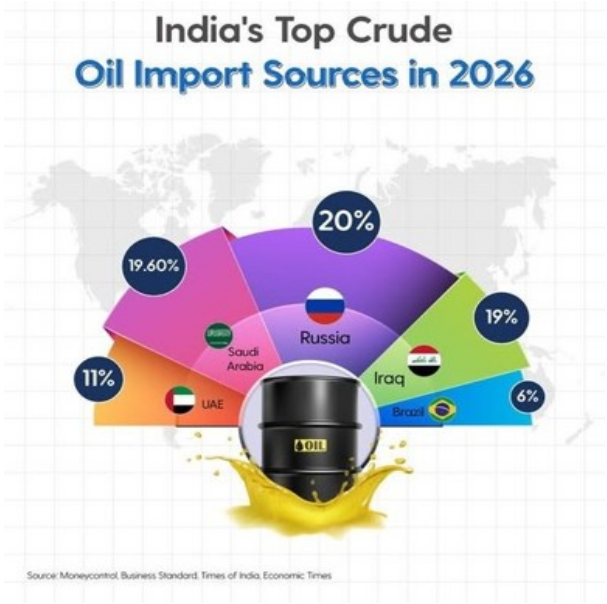
Why in News?

Recently, the researchers analyzed the population of 1,000 snow leopards due to large numbers of bharal in the Sanjiangyuan region of China.

- **Bharal –** It is called as the ***Blue Sheep*** and native to the high Himalayas.
- **Taxonomy:**
  - **Scientific name –** Pseudois Nayaur.
  - **Genus** – Pseudois, where it is the only member.
- **Distribution** – Montane regions in the Himalayas and China (in Gansu, Ningxia, Sichuan, Tibet and Inner Mongolia).
  - *India*, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan.

Bharal accounted over 80% of snow leopards food intake. Its density ranks among the world's highest in Sanjiangyuan area of China's Qinghai province, part of the Tibetan Plateau.

- **Habitat** – Open grassy slopes in high mountains and near cliffs.
- **Morphology** – Short, dense coat is slate grey in colour and bluish sheen, underparts and backs of legs are white, chest and fronts of legs are black.
- Ears are small, nose is dark, horns are found in both sexes and are ridged on the upper surface.



- **Sexual dimorphism:**
  - **Males** – Horns are grown upwards, turn sideways and curve backwards.
  - **Females** – Horns are much shorter and straighter.
- **Behavior** – They are ***active throughout the day,*** alternating between feeding and resting on the grassy mountain slopes.
- They adjust up to the precipitous cliffs, where they once again freeze, melting into the rock face.
- **Threats:**
  - Poaching for meat.
  - Competition with livestock.
- **Conservation Status:**
  - **IUCN Status** – Least Concern (LC).
  - **Wildlife Protection Act 1972** – Schedule 1.

References

1. Down to Earth| High numbers of snow leopards due to large numbers of Bharal
2. Ultimate Ungulate| Bharal

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