UPSC Daily Current Affairs | Prelim Bits 28-02-2020

1000 Spring Initiatives

- Union Tribal Affairs Ministry launched an online portal 1000 Spring Initiatives.
- It is a GIS-based Spring Atlas with hydrological and chemical properties of the springs.
- Presently, data of more than 170 springs have been uploaded on the Spring Atlas.
- It aims at improving access to safe and adequate water for the tribal communities living in difficult and inaccessible part of rural areas in the country.
- It is an integrated solution around natural springs, It includes the following

1. Provision of infrastructure for piped water supply for drinking.
2. Provision of water for irrigation.
3. Community-led total sanitation initiatives.
4. Provision for water for backyard nutrition gardens, generating sustainable livelihood opportunities for the tribal people.

- Springs are natural sources of groundwater discharge and have been used extensively in the mountainous regions across the world, including India.
- However, in the central and eastern Indian belt with more than 75% tribal population, it remains largely unrecognized and under-utilized.
- The initiative will help in harnessing the potential of perennial springs' water to address natural scarcity of water in tribal areas.
- Under this initiative, more than 70 young tribal youths from the rural belt of three districts of Odisha namely, Kalahandi, Khandamal and Gajapati have been trained as barefoot hydro geologists by combining traditional and scientific knowledge for identification and mapping of springs, and undertaking rejuvenation and protection measures in their habitations.

Van Dhan Vikas Kendra

- The Van Dhan Scheme is an initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED.

- It was launched in 2018 and seeks to improve tribal incomes through value addition of tribal products.
- The scheme will be implemented through Ministry of Tribal Affairs as Nodal Department at the Central Level and TRIFED as Nodal Agency at the National Level.
- At State level, the State Nodal Agency for MFPs and the District collectors are envisaged to play a pivot role in scheme implementation at grassroot level.
- Locally the Kendras are proposed to be managed by a Managing Committee (an SHG) consisting of representatives of Van Dhan SHGs in the cluster.

Minor Forest Produce and tribal livelihoods

- Minor Forest Produce (MFP) is a major source of livelihood for tribals living in forest areas.
- The importance of MFPs for this section of the society can be gauged from the fact that around 100 million forest dwellers depend on MFPs for food, shelter, medicines and cash income.
- It provides them critical subsistence during the lean seasons, particularly for primitive tribal groups such as hunter gatherers, and the landless.
- Tribals derive 20-40% of their annual income from MFP on which they spend major portion of their time.
- This activity has strong linkage to women's financial empowerment as most of the MFPs are collected and used/sold by women.
- MFP sector has the potential to create about 10 million workdays annually in the country.

Capacity Building of Scheduled Tribe Representatives in Local Self Governments

- Capacity Building initiative is aimed at empowering tribal Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI) representatives by enhancing their decision making capabilities at local government level.
- Among other issues concerning tribal development, it also focusses on constitutional and legal provisions that protect and promote the rights and welfare of the tribal population.
- The programme will ensure greater participation of ST PRIs representatives in planning, execution and monitoring of government policies and programmes.
- Their better participation in the development process would ensure better

prioritization of the tribal development agenda.

- The module for capacity building programme has been developed in conjunction with United Nations Development Programme for the purpose.
- This module will be translated to the local languages for imparting training.
- Facilitators from within the tribal communities will be involved in the Capacity Building process so that information sought to be conveyed can be better done in the local idiom.
- The programme will be implemented by State governments through respective State Institute for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (SIRD&PR) and TRIs.

Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh

- Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs inaugurated All India Tribal Workers Meet organised by Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh (BAJSS).
- Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh works for the communities, primarily tribals and nomadic, semi-nomadic, and Vimukta Jati communities of India and weaker sections of the society.
- It promotes their social, cultural, educational, and economic development, and also to safeguard their Constitutional rights with a view to enable them to their legitimate share in the national life of the country as equal citizens.
- BAJSS is also maintaining a comprehensive national level Tribal Museum exhibiting tribal articles and tribal culture.

Pujya Thakkar Bapa

- Pujya Thakkar Bapa, is a social worker of the Servants of India Society.
- Being a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi inspired him to work for removal of deep rooted poverty of tribals while giving service to untouchables.
- The national level voluntary organization Bhratiya Adim Jati Seval Sangh was constituted by Pujya Thakkar Bapa.
- In formulation of the Sangh, he got active participation of other eminent national level social workers and leaders.
- The first President of the Sangh was Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, who continued as President till he was alive.

Mission Purvodaya

- Mission Purvodaya in steel sector envisions to create an integrated steel hub in Eastern India.
- With abundance of raw materials, strategic geographical location and strong and developing connectivity, Odisha is well poised to be the heart of this eastern steel hub.
- The Mission is rolled out by Union Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Ministry.
- More than 75% of India's envisioned incremental steel capacity will come from eastern India, with Odisha alone crossing 100 MTPA.
- In Odisha, Kalinganagar will be developed as the epicenter of Mission Purvodaya.
- There is immense scope for growth in high grade steel, downstream sector, ancillaries, capital goods and cluster development.
- Government of India is keen to have Japan to be partner country in Mission Purvodaya.
- Japanese technological expertise, investments will further strengthen the steel sector in Odisha and drive socio-economic growth.

Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services

- Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- INCOIS provides a number of free services for users in the marine realm.
- The institute INCOIS prioritizes requests for specific services from its diverse user community that ranges right from fishermen to offshore oil exploration industries.
- Recently INCOIS has developed three products

1. Small Vessel Advisory and Forecast Services System (SVAS)
2. Swell Surge Forecast System
3. Algal Bloom Information Service (ABIS)

- All three products focus on significantly reducing damage and losses for service/product users and the coastal population.

Small Vessel Advisory and Forecast Services System (SVAS)

- The Small Vessel Advisory and Forecast Services System (SVA) is an innovative impact-based advisory and forecast service system for small vessels operating in Indian coastal waters.
- The SVA system warns users about potential zones where vessel

overturning can take place, ten days in advance.
- The advisories are valid for small vessels of beam width up to 7 m.
- This limit covers the entire range of beam widths of the fishing vessels used in all the 9 coastal states and union territories of India.
- The warning system is based on the 'Boat Safety Index' (BSI) derived from wave model forecast outputs such as significant wave height, wave steepness, directional spread and the rapid development of wind at sea which is boat-specific.

Swell Surge Forecast System

- Swell surge forecast system is an innovative system designed for the prediction of Kallakkadal/Swell Surge that occurs along the Indian coast, particularly the west coast.
- Kallakadal/Swell surge are flash-flood events that take place without any noticeable advance change in local winds or any other apparent signature in the coastal environment.
- Hence the local population remains totally unaware of these flooding events until they actually occur.
- Such events are intermittent throughout the year. Kallakkadal is a colloquial term used by Kerala fishermen to refer to the freaky flooding episodes and in 2012 UNESCO formally accepted this term for scientific use.
- During Kallakkadal events, the sea surges into the land and inundates vast areas.
- These events have attracted attention especially after the 2004 Tsunami in the Indian Ocean, since most people mistake Kallakkadal to be Tsunamis.
- Tsunami and Kallakkadal/Swell surge are two different types of waves with entirely separate causes or mechanisms.
- Kallakkadal are caused by meteorological conditions in the Southern Ocean, south of 30°S.
- A study by INCOIS scientists has revealed that specific meteorological conditions in the Southern Indian Ocean support the generation of long period swells.
- These swells once generated, travel northward and reach the Indian coasts in 3-5 days time, creating havoc in the coastal areas.
- The system will now predict Kallakkadal and warnings will be given to concerned authorities at least 2-3 days in advance, which will help the local authorities for contingency plans and to reduce damage.

Algal Bloom Information Service (ABIS)

- The increasing frequency of algal blooms is a major concern due to its ill effects on fishery, marine life and water quality. INCOIS has developed a service for "Detection and Monitoring of Bloom in the Indian Seas".
- The target users are fishermen, marine fishery resource managers, researchers, ecologists and environmentalists.
- The service also complements INCOIS' marine fishing advisories i.e. Potential Fishing Zone advisories.
- INCOIS-ABIS will provide near-real time information on spatio-temporal occurrence and spread of phytoplankton blooms over the North Indian Ocean.
- Accordingly, relevant data retrieved from satellites i.e. Sea Surface Temperature , chlorophyll-a, Algal Bloom Index - chlorophyll, rolling chlorophyll anomaly, rolling sea surface temperature anomaly, phytoplankton class/species, phytoplankton size class and a composite image delineating bloom and non-bloom regions will be disseminated daily through ABIS.
- In addition, four regions have been identified as bloom hotspots viz.
    a. North Eastern Arabian Sea
    b. coastal waters off Kerala
    c. Gulf of Mannar and
    d. Coastal waters of Gopalpur.

Unified Vehicle Registration Card

- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) had issued the guidelines to bring uniformity in driving licenses and vehicle registration cards across the country in 2019.
- These cards are being issued in compliance with these guidelines.
- The new cards will have more exhaustive information printed on both the sides of the cards.
- It will also bear a unique number recognized across the country.
- The unified smart cards for driving license and vehicle registration will each have a QR code that will help in verifying authenticity of the data printed on the cards.
- The unified driving license card will also have information about the ability of the driver to drive in hilly and dangerous areas and an emergency contact number.
- Recently Madhya Pradesh became first state to launch unified vehicle registration card and second state to launch the unified driving license after Uttar Pradesh.

Offshore Patrol Vessel-6 “VAJRA”

- Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV-6) ’VAJRA’ is launched at Chennai .
- It is the sixth Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) getting launched in the sea.
- OPV-6 is truly state of the art platform which will enhance the capabilities of Indian Coast Guard in terms of Operation, Surveillance, and Search & Rescue.
- Indian Coast Guard has increased its fleet strength and now it is one of the largest coast guards in the world.
- The ship would be utilized for day and night patrol/surveillance along with anti-terrorist/ anti-smuggling operations in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as well as Coastal Security.
- The OPV will have two Navigation Radars with ultra-modern technology, sophisticated navigational and latest communication systems.

Source: PIB, AIR News

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
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