UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelimbits 12-08-2025

Increase in Real Income for Small and Marginal Farmers

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

Recently, Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare highlighted that government initiatives have significantly increased farmers' income during the last five years.

Situation Assessment Survey (SAS) of Agricultural Households
• **Reference -** NSS 77th round of the Survey (January, 2019 – December, 2019. • **Purpose –** Periodically estimate average monthly income of agricultural households in the country. • **Conducted by** –National Statistics Office (NSO). • **Ministry** – Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MoSPI). • **Key Finding -** The average monthly income per agricultural household from various sources is estimated at Rs. 10, 218/- per month.

- Government Implemented various policies to ensure the welfare and increase the income of farmers including small and marginal farmers in the country.
- **Strategy to increase farmers income –** *Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare* has identified following integrated strategy for comprehensive growth of agriculture sector. This includes
    - Increase crop production/ productivity
    - Reduce cost of production
    - Better price realization of farmers' produces to enhance their incomes
    - Agricultural diversification
    - Developing post-harvest value addition
    - Adaptation to climate change for sustainable agriculture and mitigate against crop losses
- **Initiatives that enhance farmers income** –
    - Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)
    - Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)
    - Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan Dhan Yojana (PM-KMY)
    - Fixing of Minimum Support Price (MSP) at one-and-a half times the cost of production
    - Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)
    - Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)
    - Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)
    - Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS)
    - National Bee Keeping and Honey Mission (NBHM)
    - Agri Fund for Start Ups & Rural Enterprises' (AgriSURE)
    - Integrated Scheme for Agriculture Marketing National Agriculture Market (ISAM eNAM)
    - Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)
- **MSP increase** – With a minimum return of 50% over all India weighted average cost of production, government had increased MSPs for ***all mandated Kharif, Rabi and other Commercial crops***

from 2018-19 onwards.
- **Budget increase** – From Rs. 21933.50 crore Budget Estimates (BE) during 2013-14 to Rs. 1,27,290.16 crore BE during 2025-26 for Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW).

Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for 22 mandated crops
• Based on recommendations from the *Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP).* • **Cereals -** Paddy, wheat, barley, jowar, bajra, maize, and ragi. • **Pulses -** Gram, arhar/tur, moong, urad, and lentil. • **Oilseeds -** Groundnut, rapeseed/mustard, soyabean, sunflower, sesamum, safflower, and nigerseed. • **Commercial Crops -** Cotton, jute, and copra. *Sugarcane is also included, but with a Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) rather than an MSP.*

Reference

PIB| Increase in Real Income for Small and Marginal Farmers

Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Government policies and interventions*

Why in News?

The Minister of State for Rural Development recently described the achievement of the target under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission.

- **Aim** – To promote poverty reduction through building strong institutions for the poor, particularly women.
- It was formerly known as the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), and was renamed in 2016.
- It is a ***centrally sponsored scheme***, with funding shared between the central and state governments.
- **Target** - Mobilizing ***10 crore rural households*** into SHGs under the DAY–NRLM.

  As of June 2025, a total of ***10.05 crore women*** *has been mobilised into 90.90 lakh Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the country.*

- **Under** – Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).
- **Pillars -** Universal social mobilization, financial inclusion and livelihoods enhancement.
- **Eligibility -** The NRLM Target Households (NTH) are identified through the ***Participatory Identification of Poor (PIP)*** instead of the BPL.
  - The PIP is a community-driven process where the CBOs themselves identify the poor in the village using participatory tools.
  - The list of poor identified by the CBO is vetted by the Gram Sabha.
- **Features -** It works towards bringing at least one member (preferably a woman) from all poor families into the SHG network.

- The SGHs and their federations offer their members services such as savings, credit and livelihoods support.
- As the institutions of the poor (IOP) mature, they are facilitated to take up livelihoods/income-generating activities.
- **Demand-driven approach** – Enabling the States to formulate their own State-specific poverty reduction action plans.
- **Implementation** – Through the State RLMs or partner institutions or NGOs, would be the intensive blocks and districts, whereas the remaining would be non-intensive blocks and districts.
- DAY-NRLM is implemented *across all states and union territories* in India (except Delhi and Chandigarh).
- **Advantages** – Poor people would be facilitated to achieve increased access to their rights, entitlements, and public services, diversified risk, and better social indicators of empowerment.

Reference

PIB| Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission

Loss of Great Barrier Reef Coral

Prelims – *Current events of national and international importance* **|** *General issues on Environmental ecology, Bio-diversity and Climate Change.*

Why in News?

Recently, Australian authorities reports that the Great Barrier Reef has experienced its greatest annual loss of live coral across most of its expanse in four decades.

Great Barrier Reef

- It is located in the Coral Sea off the coast of Queensland, Australia.
- It is the ***world's largest and longest coral reef system***.
- This complex ecosystem built over millions of years from the calcium carbonate skeletons of coral polyps and hydrocorals.
- It is a ***UNESCO World Heritage site*** and a significant tourist attraction.

- **Divisions –** They extend 1,500 kilometres along the Queensland state coast, into three similarly-sized regions.
    - Northern, Central and Southern.

Recent findings

- Living coral cover shrunk by almost a third in the south in a year, a quarter in the north and by 14% in the central region.
- It shows that more than 30% were bleached across the *Torres Strait and the entire northern Great Barrier Reef*.
- Nearly 84% of the ***world's coral reef area*** has been affected because of heat stress, at least 83 countries are impacted.
- Coral bleaching has been intensified by back-to-back record global heat years.
- The report highlighted that coral reefs are especially at risk if global warming *exceeds 1.5°C (2.7°F)* above pre-industrial levels.

- Warm water (tropical) coral reefs are projected to reach a very high risk of impact at 1.2°C, evidence suggesting that coral-dominated ecosystems will be non-existent at this temperature or higher.
- At this point, coral abundance will be near zero at many locations.

Quick Facts

Corals
• Corals are animals from the ***phylum Cnidaria***, typically found along tropical coastlines. • They comprise hundreds to thousands of living organisms called polyps, each only a few millimeters in diameter. • Each polyp has its own body and a mouth with stinging tentacles to capture food such as plankton and small fish. • The polyps grow together until they form a colony, and it is this colony that we recognize as a coral. • **Types of coral -** hard corals and soft corals. • **Coral bleaching** - Occurs when corals become stressed by changes in environmental conditions such as temperature, light, or nutrient levels and expel the symbiotic algae living in their tissues. • This loss causes the corals to turn completely white. Bleached corals are not dead, but they are weaker and more vulnerable to disease. *Coral reefs cover only 1% of the ocean floor, but support an estimated 25% of all marine life in the ocean, earning them the moniker 'rainforest of the sea.'*

Reference

The Hindu| Great barrier reef loss

Dhirio - Bull Fighting

Prelims – *History of India, Current events of national importance.*

Why in News?

Recently, Legislators from all parties in the Goa assembly have demanded the legalisation of bull fighting.

- Bull fighting in Goa, locally referred as **Dhirio or Dhiri**
- It is a custom to organise fights after the harvest season.
- Dhiri was a part and parcel of *Every Church fest* and villagers gather to witness the sport in which two thorough-bred bulls fight each other.
- **Bulls and Training** - It begins with two bulls dashing at each other and locking horns.
- They head-butt each other, repeatedly charge and retreat, provoked by trainers standing behind them.
- It can be over in a few minutes or stretch for more than an hour.
- The bull that is pushed out of the arena first or runs away loses the fight, *unlike in Spain* where the fight ends only when the animal is killed.



- **Historical relevance –** The practice dates back to the Harappan civilization and evidence suggests that such fights were held for sport and entertainment.
- **Cultural relevance –** Traditionally held in paddy fields and football grounds of Goa.
- Selected and trained bulls who have been brought to the fighting pitch.

- **Issues –** Bullfighting involves pitting two bulls against each other in a violent and often bloody confrontation.
- These events subject the animals to significant physical and psychological harm, including fractures, puncture wounds, and severe stress.
- Bulls can even be stabbed to death at times.
- **Current status –** The high court banned this practice in 1997, citing violations of the ***Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.***
- **Challenges –** Fights continue to be organised secretly in coastal villages of South and North Goa.
- They are popular for betting.

Reference

The Indian Express – Bull Fight

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Geography

Uranium Deposits in India

Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD) has established 4,33,800 tonnes of Uranium resources (U^{3O8}) in India.

• **Uranium –** It is a *naturally occurring radioactive element that* decays over time and releases concentrated energy.

• **Properties** –*18.7 times denser than water.*

• It is about *500 times more common than gold* in the Earth's crust.

• **Uses –** *Uranium-235* is the primary isotope used in nuclear reactors to produce energy.

• **In India –** Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research

• It is a constituent unit of *Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).*
• **Established in –** 1949 as *'Rare Minerals Survey Unit'.*
• **Headquarter –** Hyderabad.
• **Regional centres –** Shillong, Jaipur New Delhi, Benguluru Kolkata, Jamshedpur and Nagpur.
• **Aim –** To *identify and evaluate mineral resources* of uranium, thorium, niobium, tantalum, beryllium, lithium, zirconium, titanium and rare earths containing uranium and thorium.

International Relations and Issues

'World Food India'(WFI) Conference

The WFI conference will be held at the end of October in India.
• A global event to facilitate *partnerships between Indian and international businesses* and investors.
• **Organised by –** Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
• **Aim –** To provide an opportunity for both *investment and trade in the food processing sector* for leading Indian and international companies.

Economy

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

Recently, Ayush collaborated with BIS for formulation of Indian Standards including traditional and modern aspects of products and services.
• It is the *national standard body* of India.
• **Statutory body –** Established in 1986 by *Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.*
• **Objectives –** For *standardization, product and system certification, hallmarking* of Gold/Silver jewellery, laboratory testing etc.
• To handles *global standardization and certifications.*

Agriculture

Digital Agriculture Mission

• **Established in –** 2024, by *Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.*
• **Objectives –** To create a robust *digital agriculture ecosystem.*
• To create a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), such as Agri Stack, Krishi Decision Support System and other IT initiatives.

Agri Stack

• It is a nationwide, *farmer-centric digital public infrastructure.*
• **Introduced in –** 2021, by Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.
• **Umbrella program –** Digital Agriculture Mission.
• **3 foundational registries –**
• Geo-Referenced Village Maps.
• Crop Sown Registry.
• Farmers Registry.

Science

Cancer AI & Technology Challenge (CATCH) Grant Program

• **Launched by –** IndiaAI Independent Business Division (IBD), with National Cancer Grid (NCG).
• **Nodal ministry –** Ministry of Electronics & IT.
• **Aim –** To support the development and deployment of innovative AI solutions to strengthen cancer screening, diagnostics, treatment support, and healthcare operations across India.

IndiaAI Independent Business Division (IBD)

• It is an independent business division under *Digital India Corporation (DIC).*
• **Established in –** 2023.
• **Nodal ministry –** Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
• **Aim –** To innovate and improve the *application of AI in day to day lives of citizens* of India.

WaveX

• It is the dedicated *startup accelerator platform*.
• **Initiated by –** Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.
• **Aim –** To nurture innovations in *media, entertainment, and language technology.*
• To *empower next-gen innovators* through hackathons, mentorship, and national platform integration.
• **Contests initiated –** Bhasha Setu and Kalaa Setu.

Miscellaneous

Wainwright Prize

Recently, Mr. Yuvan Aves who became 1st South Asian writer to be nominated for the Wainwright prize.

• It is *UK-based literary prize* awarded annually.
• **Established in –** 2013 after Alfred Wainwright.
• **Aim –** To spotlight the growing *genre of nature writing* and inspire readers to connect more deeply with the natural world.
• **Awarded for –** 'Intertidal' book.

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