

1. Drones using Agrochemical Spraying – Illegal

Why in News?

- The Union Government has recently clarified that drone-spraying is illegal as per the Insecticides Act, 1968.

Highlights:

- As per the Insecticide Act, 1968 does not allow aerial spraying.
- It impacts a larger area while decreasing the efficacy on the target pests.
- There is no scientific validity that drones help in precision spraying.
- The weather and wind conditions can result in drifting of the fine hazardous chemical beyond the range of application.
- The Drones and unmanned Remote-Controlled machines can be harmful tools for Spraying Chemicals.

Central Insecticides Board:

- It is established under Section 4 of the Insecticides Act, 1968 and it works under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- Its aerial application of pesticides needs approval or permission from the **Central Insecticides Board (CIB)**. It has not granted any approval or permission in the past for the use of drones to spray pesticides.

Kasargod Incident:

- Over 20 years of aerial spraying, the **Kasargod** in Kerala left many people especially children with mental and physical disorders like deformities and other health complications. The health effects include neurotoxicity, late sexual maturity, physical deformities, poisoning, among others.
- In 2011, the **Supreme Court** banned its production and distribution of Endosulfan.

2. Fruit Train

Why in News?

- Recently the 'fruit train', was flagged off from Tadipatri Railway Station in Andhra Pradesh.

About Fruit Train:

- It is carrying a load of 980 metric tonnes of locally grown bananas to the Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Mumbai, from where the consignment will be exported to Iran.
- It is the first time in India that an entire train is being sent to the gateway port (JNPT) for Export.
- It helps to save both time and fuel as 150 trucks would have been required to send a consignment of this size by road to JNPT, which is over 900 km away, before the temperature-controlled containers are loaded on Ships.

