

1. Krishna Raja Sagar Dam

Why in News?

- A rapid decline in the water level of the Krishna Raja Sagar has been reported owing to the increase in the evaporation rate and the decrease in the Inflows.

Key Points:

- The Krishna Raja Sagar Dam was built across **River Kaveri in Karnataka** in 1932.
- The dam is named after the ruler of the Mysore Kingdom, **Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV**.
- The Dam is the creation of one of the greatest engineers that India had produced, Sir M. **Vishweshwaraiah**. {His birthday, 15th September is celebrated as **Engineers day**}
- The water released from this dam is further used as an important source of water in the state of Tamil Nadu.

About Kaveri River:

- The river rises on Brahmagiri Hill of the Western Ghats in southwestern Karnataka.
- It flows in a southeasterly direction through the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, and descends the Eastern Ghats in a series of great falls.
- Tributaries: **Arkavathi, Hemavathi, Lakshmana Theertha, Shimsa, Kabini and Harangi**.
- Before emptying into the Bay of Bengal south of Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, the river breaks into a large number of distributaries forming a wide delta called the “garden of southern India.”

2. Herd Immunity

Why in News?

- Britain has announced a unique strategy to tackle Coronavirus situation. The chief scientific adviser to the UK government, said authorities would contain the spread of the virus but would “not suppress it completely”, in order to build up a degree of ‘herd immunity’.

Highlights:

- Britain has faced criticism for its soft approach to the coronavirus. The scientific advisor’s statement, too, led to a barrage of criticism from medical professionals and the public.
- Herd immunity is when a large number of people are vaccinated against a disease, lowering the chances of others being infected by it.

- When a sufficient percentage of a population is vaccinated, it slows the spread of disease. It is also referred to as community immunity or herd protection.
- Herd protection of the unvaccinated occurs when a sufficient proportion of the group is immune.
- The decline of disease incidence is greater than the proportion of individuals immunized because vaccination reduces the spread of an infectious agent by reducing the amount and/or duration of pathogen shedding by vaccines, retarding transmission.
- The approach would require those exposed to the virus to build natural immunity and stop the human-to-human transmission. This will, it is believed, subsequently halt its spread.
- Earlier this month, WHO said COVID-19 was a new virus to which no one has immunity. That means more people are susceptible to infection, and some will suffer severe disease.
- Large number of people have criticised the government's policy regarding herd immunity. They say that immediate focus should have been to save lives.

3. Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP)

Why in News?

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister, has given its approval for introducing the Scheme for Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP).

Highlights:

- Under the scheme, a mechanism would be created for reimbursement of taxes/ duties/ levies, at the central, state and local level, which are currently not being refunded under any other mechanism, but which are incurred in the process of manufacture and distribution of exported products.
- This scheme is going to give a boost to the domestic industry and Indian exports providing a level playing field for Indian producers in the International market so that domestic taxes/duties are not exported.
- Under the Scheme an inter-ministerial Committee will determine the rates and items for which the reimbursement of taxes and duties would be provided. In line with "Digital India", refund under the Scheme, in the form of transferable duty credit/electronic scrip will be issued to the exporters, which will be maintained in an electronic ledger. The Scheme will be implemented with end to end digitization.

- The refunds under the RoDTEP scheme would be a step towards “zero-rating” of exports, along with refunds such as Drawback and IGST.
- This would lead to the cost competitiveness of exported products in international markets and better employment opportunities in export-oriented manufacturing industries.

Features:

- At present, GST taxes and import/customs duties for inputs required to manufacture exported products are either exempted or refunded.
- However, certain taxes/duties/levies are outside GST, and are not refunded for exports, such as, VAT on fuel used in transportation, Mandi tax, Duty on electricity used during manufacturing etc. These would be covered for reimbursement under the RoDTEP Scheme.
- The rebate would be claimed as a percentage of the Freight On Board (FOB) value of Exports.

4. Major Port Authorities Bill 2020

Why in News?

- Major Port Authorities Bill 2020 was introduced in the Lok Sabha by the Minister of State for Shipping recently.

Highlights:

- The Ministry of Shipping has proposed to replace the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 by the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020.
- This will empower the Major Ports to perform with greater efficiency on account of full autonomy in decision making and by modernizing the institutional framework of Major Ports.
- It would help to impart faster and transparent decision making benefiting the stakeholders and better project execution capability.
- The Bill is aimed at reorienting the governance model in central ports to landlord port model in line with the Successful Global Practice.
- This will also help in bringing transparency in operations of Major Ports.

Salient Features:

- It is compact in comparison to the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 as the number of sections has been reduced to 76 from 134 by eliminating overlapping and obsolete Sections.

- The Bill has proposed a simplified composition of the Board of Port Authority which will comprise of 11 to 13 Members.
- A compact Board with professional independent Members will strengthen decision making and strategic planning.
- The role of Tariff Authority for Major Ports (TAMP) has been redefined.
- Port Authority has now been given powers to fix tariff which will act as a reference tariff for purposes of bidding for PPP projects.
- PPP operators will be free to fix tariff based on market conditions.
- The Board of Port Authority has been delegated the power to fix the scale of rates for other port services and assets including land.

Objective:

- The Bill seeks to provide for regulation, operation and planning of Major Ports in India and to vest the administration, control and management of such ports upon the Boards of Major Port Authorities and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- To promote the expansion of port infrastructure and facilitate trade and commerce.
- It aims at decentralizing decision making and to infuse professionalism in governance of Major Ports.

5. CHAITRA JATRA FESTIVAL

Context:

- Recently, the famous annual Chaitra Jatra festival scheduled to be held on March 17 was cancelled as a precautionary measure against COVID-19 infection.

About CHAITRA JATRA FESTIVAL:

- It is celebrated at Tara Tarini hill shrine on Tuesdays of the Hindu month of Chaitra. The largest gatherings occur on second and third Tuesdays. March 17 happens to be second Tuesday.
- The Tara Tarini hill shrine is located at Kumari hill on banks of the Rushikulya river, is a major centre of Shakti worship in **Odisha**.

6. Market Intelligence and Early Warning System (MIEWS) Web Portal

Context:

- Recently, Union Minister of Food Processing Industries has launched the Market Intelligence and Early Warning System (MIEWS) Web Portal.

About the Portal:

- It will provide real time monitoring of prices of tomato, onion and potato (TOP) and simultaneously generate alerts for intervention under the terms of the Operation Greens (OG) scheme.
- It would also disseminate all relevant information related to TOP crops such as Prices and Arrivals, Area, Yield and Production, Imports and Exports among others.

About Operation Greens:

- It is announced by the Union government in the Budget 2018-2019 with an outlay of Rs.500 crores.
- It aims to contain the annual price distress of tomatoes, onions and potatoes (TOP) in regions with high production.
- It aspires to increase the income of the farmers as in line with an ambition of doubling the farmer's income by 2022.
- Their goals are to be achieved through interventions by encouraging farmer producers' organisations, agri-logistics, processing facilities and Professional Management.

About the Salient Features Include:

- low price and high price alerts would be indicated in the dashboard
- price forecasts for 3 months forward would be provided on the portal
- Information about Prices and arrivals of TOP crops across the country
- Area, Yield and Production of TOP crops
- Crop Agronomy and Trade Profile of TOP crops

7. National Creche Scheme

Context:

- National Creche Scheme is recently seen in news.

About National Creche Scheme:

- It is a centrally sponsored scheme being implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- It was earlier named as Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme.
- It aims to provide day care facilities to children age group of 6 months to 6 years, of working mothers.
- Its **fund sharing pattern**, States/UTs & Non-Governmental Organisations/Voluntary Organisations is in the ratio of 60:30:10 for States, 80:10:10 for North Eastern States and Himalayan States and 90:0:10 for UTs.

Salient Features:

- ✓ Day-care Facilities including Sleeping Facilities.
- ✓ Early Stimulation for children below 3 years and pre-school Education for 3 to 6 years old children.
- ✓ Supplementary Nutrition to be locally sourced
- ✓ Growth Monitoring
- ✓ Health Check-up and Immunization

Guidelines:

- It shall be open for 26 days in a month and for seven and half (7-1/2) hours per day.
- The number of children in the crèche should not be more than 25 per crèche.
- User charges will be levied to bring in an element of community ownership.
- It helps women to manage both their career as well as their family responsibility. It promotes gender diversity at workplaces. It helps promote gender equality and democracy by increasing participation of women in the Economy.

8. SEPSIS

Why in News?

- Recently, many coronavirus patients have died of sepsis – when the body’s immune system goes into overdrive.

About SEPSIS:

- It is a life-threatening organ dysfunction caused by the body’s immune system overreacting in response to an infection. This overactive, toxic response can lead to tissue damage, multiple organ failure and death.
- In addition to the known seasonal influenza viruses, other viruses that are highly infectious, such as coronaviruses, Ebola and yellow fever viruses, dengue, swine flu or bird flu viruses can also cause sepsis.
- It can be triggered by a variety of pathogens such as Viruses, bacteria, fungi or parasites. The **causes of Sepsis** are usually pneumonia, wound infections, urinary tract infections or infections in the abdominal cavity.
- Its symptoms are, drop in blood pressure with a simultaneous rise in heart rate, fever, rapid, heavy breathing, an unusually strong feeling of illness and sudden confusion.
- Its Long-term consequences are kidney failure or cardiovascular problems can recur about three months after discharge.