

1. Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB).

Why in News?

- Recently, the Central government has decided to adopt a new criterion for selecting members of the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB).

Highlights:

- A notification has been issued to amend the BBMB Rules 1974, thereby changing the criteria for the selection of whole-time members of the Board.
- As per the BBMB Rules, 1974, the member (power) in BBMB was from Punjab and the member (irrigation) was from Haryana but the requirement has been removed in the amended rules.
- New rules specify technical qualifications for the appointments and pave the way for appointment of the members from across India and not only Punjab and Haryana.
- The new rules have been opposed by the engineers' fraternity, farmers as well as the political parties of Punjab.
- The engineers have pointed out that hardly any engineer would qualify for appointment as per the new specifications, which appear to be tailor-made for some personnel to be appointed from outside Punjab and Haryana.
- On the other hand, officials have argued that the changes have been made in pursuance to a judgement of the Punjab and Haryana High Court in the case of Jagmohan Singh Vs Union of India.
- The genesis of BBMB lies in the Indus Water Treaty signed between India and Pakistan in 1960.
- Under the treaty, waters of three eastern rivers— Ravi, Beas and Sutlej — were allotted to India for exclusive use while Indus, Chenab and Jhelum rivers were allocated to Pakistan.
- In India, a master plan was drawn to harness the potential of these rivers for providing assured irrigation, power generation and flood control.
- Bhakra and Beas projects form a major part of this plan and were established as a joint venture of the then undivided Punjab and Rajasthan.
- Following the reorganisation of Punjab on 1st November 1966, and the creation of the state of Haryana, the Bhakra Management Board was constituted under Section 79 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966.

- The Administration, Maintenance and operation of Bhakra Nangal project was handed over to Bhakra Management on 1st October 1967.
- The Beas Project Works, on completion, were transferred from Beas Construction Board (BCB) to Bhakra Management Board as per the provisions of Section 80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966.
- Pursuant to this Bhakra Management Board was renamed as Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) w.e.f. 15th May 1976.
- Since then, BBMB regulates supply of water and power to Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Chandigarh.

2. Solarisation of Konark Sun Temple

Why in News?

- Konark is going to be the first model town in Odisha to shift from grid dependency to Green Energy. The Odisha government has issued a policy guideline in this regard.
- In May 2020, the central government launched a scheme for solarisation of Konark Sun Temple and Konark town in Odisha.

Highlights:

- Under the guidelines, the state has targeted to generate 2,750 megawatt (MW) from renewable energy sources like the sun, wind, biomass, small hydro and waste-to-energy (WTE), etc. by 2022-end.
- The state also targets to generate 2,200 MW from solar energy and a part of it will be utilised to run the Sun Temple and Konark town on solar energy.
- Konark's transition to renewable energy is part of an ambitious plan by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- The shifting from grid to solar energy will help reduce the electricity consumption of the Sun Temple.
- The financial benefit from solar energy will help divert spending on other developmental work of the temple.
- Odisha faces many challenges in setting up huge solar power plants.
- The state has 480 km of coastline and is prone to regular cyclones. It has so far encountered 10 cyclones including Super Cyclone, Phailin, Hudhud, Titli, Amphan and Fani in 22 years.

- Besides this, land acquisition is another major challenge in setting up solar power plants.
- While coastal areas are cyclone-prone, some parts of Odisha have dense forests whereas land is expensive in densely-populated areas
- It was declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 1984.
- There are two rows of 12 wheels on each side of the Konark sun temple. Some say the wheels represent the 24 hours in a day and others say the 12 months.
- The seven horses are said to symbolise the seven days of the week.
- Sailors once called this Sun Temple of Konark, the Black Pagoda because it was supposed to draw ships into the shore and cause shipwrecks.
- Konark is the invaluable link in the history of the diffusion of the cult of Surya, which originating in Kashmir during the 8th century, finally reached the shores of Eastern India.

3. Wet Bulb' Temperature

Why in News?

- Part 2 of the sixth assessment report of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), has recently emphasised on the trend in the 'Wet Bulb' Temperature in South Asia.

Highlights:

- Wet bulb temperature is the lowest temperature to which air can be cooled by the evaporation of water into the air at a constant pressure.
- WBT is a limit that considers heat and humidity beyond which humans can not tolerate high temperatures.
- The Wet Bulb temperature is the temperature of adiabatic saturation. This is the temperature indicated by a moistened thermometer bulb exposed to the air flow.
- An adiabatic process is one in which no heat is gained or lost by the system.
- Wet Bulb temperature can be measured by using a thermometer with the bulb wrapped in wet muslin. The adiabatic evaporation of water from the thermometer and the cooling effect is indicated by a "wet bulb temperature" lower than the "dry bulb temperature" in the air. The rate of evaporation from the wet bandage on the bulb, and the temperature difference between the dry bulb and wet bulb, depends on the humidity of the air.
- The evaporation is reduced when the air contains more water vapour.
- The wet bulb temperature is always lower than the dry bulb temperature but will be identical with 100% relative humidity (the air is at the saturation line).

4. Montreux Convention

Why in News?

- Turkey is set to activate the Montreux Convention in response to Russia's War over Ukraine.
- The declaration that situation in Ukraine had become a war, authorizes Turkey to activate the Montreux Convention and ban Russian war vessels from entering the Black Sea through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits.

Highlights:

- The Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits, also known as the Turkish Straits or the Black Sea Straits, connect the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea via the Sea of Marmara.
- It is the only passage through which the Black Sea ports can access the Mediterranean and beyond.
- Over three million barrels of oil, about 3% of the daily global supply, mostly produced in Russia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan, pass through this waterway every day.
- The route also ships large amounts of iron, steel, and agricultural products from the Black Sea coast to Europe and the rest of the world.
- The International agreement was signed by Australia, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Japan, Romania, Yugoslavia, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and Turkey and has been in effect since November 1936.
- The Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits gives Turkey control over the water route between the Black Sea.
- Russia has a major navy base at Sevastopol, on the Crimean Peninsula.
- However, for ships to move to and from the Mediterranean – and beyond – they have to pass through two straits controlled by Turkey under the Montreux Convention.
- This exception provides Russia with an alternate way to exploit the Montreux Convention, which would be to reassign some of its vessels to the Black Sea.